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evangelical VISITOR

August 1990

13. Unfinished Business

a. Renewal 2000-Doctrinal Statement

The Brethren in Christ from time to time have made doctrinal statements that reflect their understandings about faith and life. Our present statement of doctrine and practice was written during the late 1950s and adopted in 1961. Now, after nearly thirty years, we renew our statement of faith reflecting our understanding of God's Word. We need a confession of faith that addresses the issues of our generation and inspires behavior which is consistent with biblical principles.

It should be noted that while the doctrinal statement includes elements of both faith and practice, specific details on Christian life and practice are also found in Article XXII of our Manual of Doctrine and Government (p. 71). Proposals for revising Article XXII will be presented to General Conference in keeping with this new doctrinal statement, relating to such specific issues as marriage, divorce, and remarriage; homosexuality; abortion; capital punishment; euthanasia; genetic engineering; and ecology.

Prayerful thought was given in this doctrinal statement to major theological themes and our particular tenets of doctrine and practice. We solicited as wide and varied responses as possible. It is our intent that this be a helpful doctrinal statement which we can share with our generation.

A preliminary outline was presented to the 1988 General Conference. At that meeting we authorized writers and asked the task force approved by the 1986 General Conference to continue its work. During 1988-89, we reviewed drafts of the doctrinal statement and submitted them to a wide circle of readers. Beginning with the preliminary outline stage, anyone who desired to do so was invited to submit suggestions and changes.

From the beginning of this writing process, we have sought to draw on Scripture in preparing the doctrinal statement. The writers have listed many of the Scriptures they used in writing the first draft. Task force members added references as they reviewed various drafts. The resulting list of Scripture references follows the doctrinal statement, organized by the added references as they reviewed various drafts. Due to limitation of space, the listing can be only illustrative, not exhaustive. Also, it is not in section titles and paragraph order of the text. The final form of the doctrinal statement will be decided upon the selection of Scriptures. Thus we plan consideration before finalizing up the selection of Scriptures. We plan to edit the Scripture section during the 1990-92 biennium and bring it to the next General Conference for adoption.

The following draft has been recommended by the task force meeting on November 30-December 1, 1989. All regional conferences had copies of this draft at their 1990 annual meetings for informational purposes. It was reviewed by the Board of Administration and is being recommended for a first reading at this 1990 General Conference (Ref.: 1988 General Conference Minutes, pp. 27-33, item 12(a)(4) Renewal 2000-Phase I). Our constitution calls for a two-thirds' vote of two successive General Conferences for adoption.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST (Recommended)

1. Introduction

The Brethren in Christ trace our beginnings from a group known as the River Brethren, which originated about 1778 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Our forebears bore witness to the beliefs which set them apart by formulating a Confession of Faith. The first confessional statement of about 1780 and others that followed reflect the Pietistic and Anabaptist influences which have shaped our doctrinal understandings. Some one hundred years later the Brethren in Christ adopted aspects of Wesleyan thought which were incorporated into subsequent doctrinal statements.

Through the years we have reaffirmed and redefined our essential beliefs. In the 20th century, new doctrinal statements were adopted by General Conferences, in 1937 and again in 1959. In 1986 we decided to give written expression to our current beliefs and life. This was done with a sensitivity to and respect for our doctrinal heritage. We

regard each previous doctrinal statement of the church as having its own integrity.

In preparing the doctrinal statement we affirm an understanding and scriptural interpretation that recognizes (1) the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit; (2) the centrality of Christ in divine revelation; (3) the New Testament as interpreter of the Old Testament; (4) the scriptural focus on piety and obedience; and (5) the essential value of community consensus in the interpretive process. One must read the doctrinal statement as a whole, since each of the sections is closely related to the others. Moreover, this is a summary statement of our beliefs; the Brethren in Christ Manual of Doctrine and Government together with other publications of the church explain more fully our understanding of biblical faith and the Christian life.

Following the doctrinal statement is a listing of selected Scripture references. Since the doctrinal statement grows out of the totality of the biblical message, these references are only illustrative of the scriptural truths identified in each section. Study of these and other related Scripture passages is important for a clearer understanding of God and his will for humanity.

Here then in summary is what we, the Brethren in Christ, believe about revelation and Scripture, God and creation, humanity and sin, Jesus Christ and salvation, the Holy Spirit and the church, eternal hope and judgment.

Section I — REVELATION AND SCRIPTURE

We believe that it is the nature of God to make himself known. God reveals himself to humanity in various ways, most clearly in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. We accept these divinely inspired writings as the authoritative Word of God.

Revelation in Nature, History, and the Son

The world of nature and God's sustaining care of it speak of his existence and power. Within human hearts God has placed a sense of right and wrong. This revelation through nature and conscience is partial and incomplete.

Therefore God has acted in history to reveal himself to humanity. Through Abraham, God began to form a covenant community that would reveal God and his will to all humanity. Through his words, acts, and relationship to the people of Israel, God has made his attributes and purposes known in order to provide salvation to all who respond in faith and obedience.

In all of this, God was preparing for the time when he would reveal himself preeminently through his Son, Jesus Christ—the Word made flesh.

Scripture, the Record of Revelation

The Christian Scriptures complete the revelation of God. They recount and interpret God's action in creation, in human events, in God's saving acts for Israel, in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the life of the New Testament church.

The Scriptures are God's message, written by people in their own language and settings, as inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also guided the processes of selection and transcription through which the Scriptures were passed on to us. Therefore the Bible is the authoritative and reliable word of God.

We believe that the Bible, composed of the Old Testament (39 books) and the New Testament (27 books), is God's written word. The Old Testament is the record of God's saving acts for Israel and of his redemptive purpose for all people. It contains numerous prophecies, many of which are fulfilled in the New Testament. The New Testament clearly reveals God in the person and work of Jesus Christ, whom God sent to be the Savior of the world and to establish his church.

REFERRED
TO 1992



Having a distaste for politics, I never felt attracted to General Conference. I have been pleasantly surprised, therefore, by the deeply spiritual atmosphere of this assembly. It has been fascinating and uplifting to see heated debate and Christian brotherhood coming together in a way that honors our Lord. —Diane Wolgemuth, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

"We're plodding wearily along the road of our experiments." So Luke Keefer, Sr. summarized the work of the 111th General Conference in his Thursday afternoon prayer. Bishop Alderfer used a slightly different analogy when sponsoring Vision Planning 2000 earlier in the week. He said, "Vision Planning is not the vision; it is the vehicle." Clearly, the Brethren in Christ—whether plodding the road, or tinkering with the vehicle machinery—did not arrive at Vision. We came away from Grantham with no new doctrinal statement, a tentative structure approved only for field testing and extensive review, no adopted statements on militarism or military chaplaincy,

and a fatigued (but intact) sense of brotherhood.

Despite the frustrations there were joys. The body was (amazingly) able to rise during the consecration service for its new leaders and sing of the church: "Beyond my highest joy, I prize her heavenly ways, her sweet communion, solemn vows, her hymns of love and praise." Healing words, tearful prayers, acts of repentance and forgiveness, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit affirmed throughout the week that the body shows definite signs of vitality. No doubt many will watch and anxiously await the reemergence of Vision in the next biennium. Accompanying the wait are the lingering questions: Will /can/should vision come from General Conference administrators? Is there still a way for vision to come from the common persons, the grassroots, the regional conferences, even the General boards? And, does it really matter whether the vehicle is a Yugo or an Olds?



General Conference photography by George Bundy and Eugene Wingert.

Vision and leadership

As one brother from the Midwest put it, "Indian chiefs are very brave and courageous, but don't win many battles without the Indians behind them." Similar awareness had been stated earlier by a church leader quoting John Maxwell when he quip-

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The road to Vision



ped, "If you think you are leading and look behind you and no one is following, you are merely out for a walk." Leading and following were definitely forefront issues at this Conference.

Certain leaders of boards and agencies must have felt that their hard work of the past biennium had been merely a walk in the park. On Tuesday morning, in sponsorship of the statement on militarism mandated by an earlier Conference, the Board for Brotherhood Concerns (BBC) outlined their careful steps in drafting and developing the document. The statement had been widely published, with extensive effort made to secure grassroots response. The hymn words "What more can we say, than to you we have said?" may have been going through the minds of board members when a brother

stood to say he felt "robbed" of the opportunity to discuss the statement and "incredibly saddened" at the Conference process.

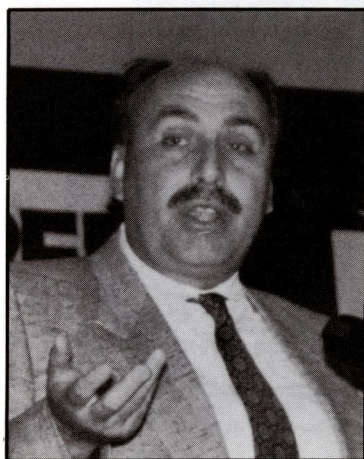
Therefore, after having initially passed, the statement was again (only minutes later) placed on the floor for debate. It was eventually referred to the board for resubmission to the 1992 Conference. A representative of the board calmly rose to plead for direction in how to improve the process of communication. One had to wonder if the molders of the doctrinal statement had similar feelings after their widespread distribution of numerous drafts of the document and repeated opportunities for response led to a similar conclusion by Conference.

Another aspect of vision and leadership was accented by the Board for Congregational Life in their re-

I was impressed with the feeling of unity in brotherhood even in times of strong difference in opinion. I particularly appreciate the patience and longsuffering shown by the various moderators during these discussions. The Spirit of God was certainly displayed in their actions. . . . I praise God that we have the love and unity of purpose to address these issues as a body and still be able to worship together as brothers and sisters in Christ without regard to the strong difference in opinion only a few hours before. —Jim Fortner, Harvest congregation, Naples, Fla.



From right to left: John A. Byers, Moderator; R. Donald Shafer, General Secretary; Craig Sider, recording secretary; Eva Brubaker, assistant recording secretary; Perry Engle, reading clerk.



As we got into the business, I observed an irony. Many of us gathered were pastors, deacons, and members of various boards on the congregational level. . . . At General Conference, suddenly the roles were reversed. Now, we who are leaders "back home" became the "congregation." Our denominational leaders hope that we would give them the same benefit of confidence that we desire from our home congregations. The irony was that with the roles reversed, too many of us who "moan" when our congregation fails to show that confidence in us were now, like them, denying our leaders that same vote of confidence.

It seems to me that if our leaders are unworthy of greater trust, it's more a reflection on the intelligence of the conference body than it is on the character of our leaders. After all, we chose them. —Leon Kanagy, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

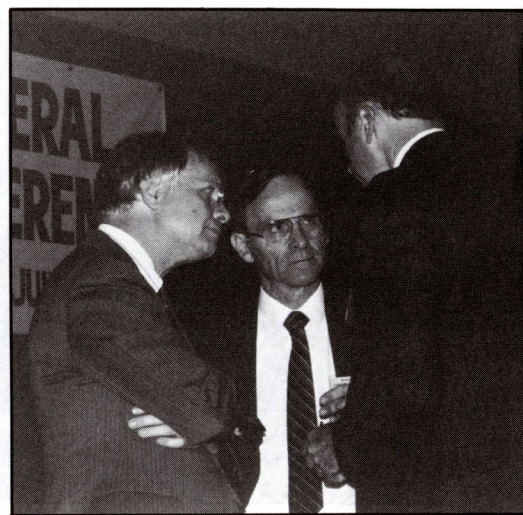
port. Using a dramatization of "Letters to Questina and Wonderina," board members—with their usual wit and creativity—communicated honest doubts and disappointment that their momentum might be stopped by Vision Planning. Balancing these fears were many positive suggestions on how their agenda might be addressed effectively under the new structure, and how boards, congregations, and individuals alike will have to make adjustments as we all "lean into the curves."

As Conference progressed, delegates made strong statements both against and for recent displays of leadership. Ethan Gramm rose early to express deep concern about the actions of the Board of Administration, saying that "his confidence had been shaken" in the past year. Lester Fretz asked whether Vision Planning would give BOA the "green light" to spring surprises on ensuing Conferences. Leonard Chester, in two different contexts, accused leadership of "excessive use of authority in the life of the church." At times, the chair was accused of heavy-handedness in its adherence to parliamentary procedure, and in its closing off of debate.

Still others, such as Stuart Kelly and David Hall, called for increased trust in our leaders. A BOA sponsor of Vision Planning stated that no one—leaders and followers alike—wanted Vision Planning to be an issue of power, but one of leadership and influence. It was asked, "Are brotherhood and leadership in contradiction?" Unwillingness or un-

readiness to act on the work brought by leadership was evidenced as other business was put off until the 1992 Conference in Canada. One pastor expressed his frustration at this Conference's unwillingness to pass anything: "Where is the trust we need to move ahead? I've been frustrated to be part of a large body trying to do detail business. That's why we elect leaders."

Debate indicated that the Brethren in Christ have not wandered far from our Anabaptist mistrust of governments and power. One respondent said, "We have heard over and over, 'we need to trust our leaders'; but the flip side of that truth is that the leaders need to 'trust the people.' This is the Brethren in Christ mind-set." However, a tally of the votes of the body indicated a willingness to move ahead with change in support of the Vision Planning proposals. The "field testing" struc-



Kevin Ryan (far left), Mary Jane Davis, and Douglas Sider each spoke on a different aspect of the theme "This We Believe." On Thursday, guest speaker Siegfried Bartel (MCC Executive Committee), a German officer in W.W. II, told of his coming to an understanding of the gospel of peace.

ture was put into place with the additional check of a special review board to help bring evaluation and bylaw recommendations to the 1992 General Conference.

Vision and doctrine

Seeking an adequate expression of divergent views—within the context of brotherhood—was also what Conference was about. John Byers' opening Conference prayer pleaded for wisdom and understanding in all Conference dealings. He called for "sensitivity, graciousness, and wise stewardship of time," all basic components of brotherhood. Conference struggled with how to state what we believe, while somehow showing sensitivity to minority viewpoints. Two observations surfaced: (1) the assimilation of persons with non-Brethren in Christ backgrounds is creating tensions surrounding certain long-held beliefs; and (2) even long-time Brethren in Christ are viewing matters of restructure and authority in different ways. Yet, the quest for self-expression within the framework of brotherhood remained paramount.

Perhaps the most oft-repeated word at Conference was brotherhood. Despite the masculine connotation of the word and some sisterly opposition to it, the Brethren in Christ do not seem willing to give it up. One of the most perceptive questions about the doctrinal statement had to do with the use of the term "covenant community" throughout the document. "Was this a new Brethren in Christ term, an attempt to improve on the word brotherhood?" one person asked. The answer

Assistant Moderator Robert Ives, Moderator John Byers, and General Secretary Don Shafer confer.

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The Board for Congregational Life's presentation focused on ramifications of "Vision Planning." In addition, BCL was in charge of the children and youth programs at Conference (top of next page).

I sensed a divisive spirit among the conference body. I believe this atmosphere warranted spending time, as limited as it was, in the spirit of prayer. This is my third conference, and I have not sensed such uneasiness among the body before.

Perhaps this can be attributed to the sensitive nature of the agenda items and the diversity of the brotherhood. . . . I learned more about parliamentary procedure here than I was taught at Bible college! Thanks to our moderators.

—Richard Silvestro, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

from a sponsor was, "Yes; it is a new way to express a need for strengthened commitment to one another." But whether the Brethren want to change our terminology was never put to a test vote.

The issue of our historic peace stance also received considerable attention because of the doctrinal statement, the paper on military chaplaincy brought by the Board for Ministry and Doctrine, and the militarism statement drafted by the Board for Brotherhood Concerns. Heated debate arose, for instance, about the relationship between militarism and flying the national flag in church buildings.

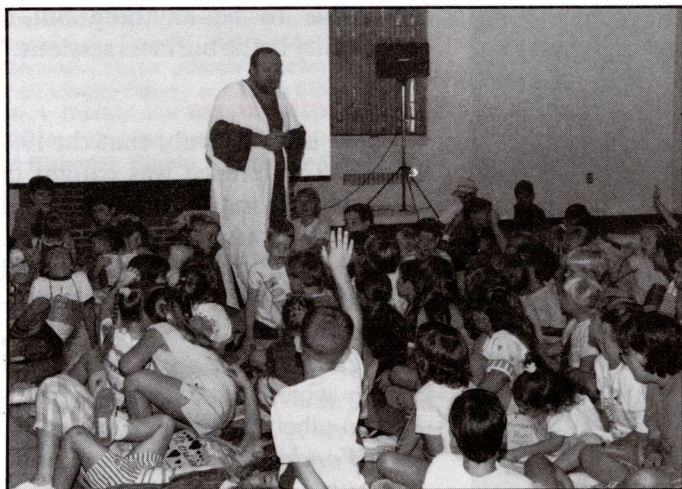
One brother strongly felt the tension between inclusive brotherhood and a search for biblical truth as he responded to the *Visitor*: "Bluntly, I've heard a few people speak [against

our historic peace stance] and I wonder why they try to identify with the church. I've chosen [this] church as a place that generally gives me a place to practice my faith. It seems a lack of integrity for some to change the church so much that there's a place for them, but in so doing to violate what we are. I've been aware of a real tension between people, and theology and practice. We are to serve people, but not at the expense of truth. It is not appropriate to exclude people over a nonessential truth; neither is it appropriate to include people if it violates truth—even if it seems to hurt people. The goal is *truth in love*, but easier said than done."

Numerous other questions surfaced in discussion of the doctrinal statement on Saturday and Thursday. Are we avoiding controversial issues that would tend to cause division? Is our statement on sanctification adequate? Can we "expect" anything from our brothers and sisters ("expect baptized believers to commit themselves" to membership), or is this too strong a word? Are we purposely leaving out statements on headcovering and the holy kiss? Is there no place in this document for theological language? Why do we not capitalize pronouns referring to Deity? . . . and on and on.

Finally, after questions and debate only—with no motions to amend during the first time through the statement, as requested by the Task





Force—and no time for General Conference to express its preference by vote on issues relative to the statement, the carriage turned back into a pumpkin mid-afternoon Thursday. A motion was approved to refer the statement to the Task Force and to bring it back to the 1992 Conference no later than Tuesday morning. History repeated itself when the Conference body deemed it wiser to allow extra years for debate and ownership of the document than to push a statement through which might be insensitive to the concerns that were expressed. The Brethren in Christ will not have an approved new statement before 1994.

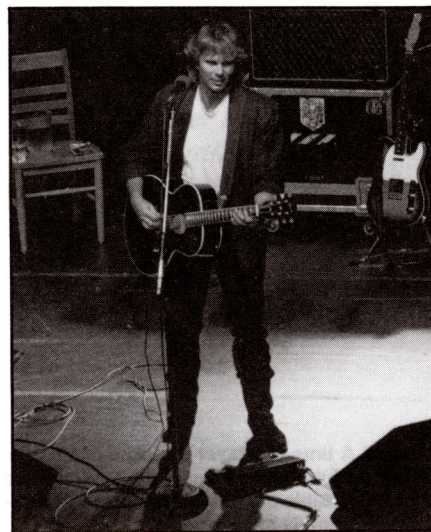
Vision and worship

As always, worship times at Conference helped alleviate the tensions of business. It was countless, renewed visions of Jesus that kept

Conference going. To begin his Conference sermon, Owen Alderfer told the story of Jesus meeting three men along the road who were crying. Jesus healed the first two without hesitation. When he asked the third his reason for weeping, the man said, "I'm a Brethren in Christ pastor. I just received the Conference agenda and I don't think we'll ever get through it. . . . And Jesus sat down and cried with him!" After that laugh, Alderfer went on to challenge the body to exhibit *belief power*. (See the July 1990 *Evangelical Visitor* for the complete sermon.)

Music was abundantly beautiful as the congregation, instrumentalists, songleaders, and vocalists brought their gifts. Among those soothing the discord of tired souls were: The Ministers of Music Male Quartet, the Atlantic and Allegheny Conferences combined choir, the New Guilford Kids' Choir presenting "Psalty's Hymnological Adventure," Kevin Witter, the Messiah College Singers, a Messiah summer ministry team, the Messiah Village Singing Men, Gerald and Lucille Wingert, Roger and Gwendolyn Lentz, Lamar Dourte and Alice Dourte, and the Pequea bell choir.

Another dimension of General Conference I'd like to address is the ministry to the children. I know my children will be talking about their week for a long time to come. By having special programs of interest available to the children, it is a great way to introduce our young people to the extended Brethren in Christ family. —Heidi Long, Manor congregation, Pa.



Left: Gwendolyn Lentz sang Wednesday afternoon. Right: Kenny Marks in concert for the youth Monday night.



The inspirational and worship messages were informative and challenging, obviously delivered by persons who understood the pulse of our beloved Brethren in Christ Church. I will long remember the bishops' and church officers' consecration service, especially the prayer of Luke Keefer, Jr. as he brought our hurts and failures as a body to the cross for forgiveness and healing. — Mary McNiven, Boyle congregation, Ont.

Other moments of vision in worship came in the communion and footwashing service Tuesday night during which many persons came to the microphone to testify to the Lord's goodness. The prayer of Luke Keefer, Jr. during the installation ritual Wednesday night moved the assembled body to tearful reconsideration of attitudes and actions. Said Alderfer in prayer to the four Conference leaders: "May you be kept in harmony with Christ, the head of the Church." A concert of prayer on Sunday night, early morning prayer sessions, small group prayers and spontaneous prayer choruses kept alive a vision of true purposes and pure motives. As one member of Conference noted, "The times of worship and prayer made it almost

impossible to be anything but a community in the business sessions."

Vision for the future

There is little doubt that the 1990 General Conference was caught in the cogs of moral introspection and internal governmental change. But, as the Board for Congregational Life skit pointed out, vigorous discussion of doubts, disappointments, and fears are all signs of a vital church which is temporarily plodding an albeit "experimental" path:

Wonderina: *It does sound exciting, but I still have a lot of doubts as to whether some of these [Vision Planning] ideas will work . . . But at least we can still ask our questions.*

Questina: *And express our doubts.*

Wonderina: *One thing is for sure—You and I and Uncle Grover [the character in the skit representing administrators] want the best for the church.*

Questina: *Yes, but we just can't quite see how it will all work out. . . . That's another contributing factor to uneasiness with change—fear of the future.*

Uncle Grover: *Thanks for your questions and doubts. That's how I know you're interested. If you didn't have any questions or concerns, I guess you really wouldn't be concerned about the church.*



Above: A time of prayer during Conference. Right: A multi-media presentation highlighted Kenbrook Bible Camp's 40th anniversary celebration Sunday afternoon.

Owen Alderfer, bishop and former General Secretary, installs the newly-confirmed General Church officers (shown here with their wives): Harvey and Erma Sider (Moderator); Donald and Marlene Shafer (General Secretary); John and Esther Byers (Director of Bishops); Harold and Nancy Chubb (Director of Finance).



Doug Sider also wondered about the future in his Conference sermon, "This We Believe": "What would happen," he queried, "if we would meet for six days to seek the face of God for lost people, to develop strategies for evangelism, and to equip for evangelism?" Looking toward the adoption of a new doctrinal statement around which we can all rally, he challenged each person in the brotherhood to "put the new statement on the altar, and pray for instruction from God on how we are to live in respect to it." He also challenged each church board to call a special meeting to consider the question: If Christ was returning in July 1991, what changes would we make in our church's conduct, priorities, and behavior?

Kevin Ryan, in his Conference sermon, referred to two key Brethren in Christ words when he said, "For us, faith and obedience are joined at

the hip." Now, as a result of the push of administrators and the struggles of the 1990 General Conference, another word—Vision—has entered our consciousness. With a new structure tentatively in place, a doctrinal statement on the burner, new General Conference officers and bishops at the helm, it remains to be seen what will become of our vision—both of ourselves as a brotherhood and of the lost world around us. How long will it take us to fix the vehicle and get back on the road?—HJ

The facilities, food, and fellowship have been delightful. I especially compliment the efficient way in which the Information Desk responded courteously and positively to all my family's requests as out of town guests. We felt right at home at Messiah College. —Brent Heath, Upland congregation, Calif.



Newly-elected bishops and spouses are installed by John Byers, new Director of Bishops. Standing behind the new bishops are representatives from the various regional conferences. From right to left: Louis and Ruth Cober, Pacific and Southeast Conferences; Glenn and Joyce Ginder, Midwest and Central Conferences; Dale and Ann Marie Shaw, Canadian Conference; Warren and Connie Hoffman, Atlantic Conference; H. Frank Kipe, Allegheny Conference [Allegheny West]; John and JoLene Hawbaker, Susquehanna Conference [Allegheny East].

I would have liked to have had more quality time to spend on the doctrinal statement, which seemed to be the best thought-out portion of General Conference. I hope this is not too negative sounding as I believe we accomplished a lot of work. —Ron Howell, Zion congregation, Kansas.

Additional quotes from General Conference

Removed culturally and geographically from our sister Brethren in Christ churches makes it difficult to easily relate to the gathered Conference body. It has been through time of prayer, hearing the Word proclaimed such as Owen Alderfer's conference sermon, and worshipping the risen Lord in communion and footwashing that ties—though always present—have been renewed and my faith strengthened again.

The business meetings have seemed to me to be particularly difficult and painful. . . . It is perhaps symbolic that the consideration of the new doctrinal statement, the statement on militarism, as well as the statement on military chaplaincy have received but hurried consideration and referral in a conference where the theme was "This We Believe."—*David Miller, Communion Chretienne Nouvelle Vie, St. Romuald, Quebec*

The messages were powerful. The message of Siegfried W. Bartel moved the conference body to tears (I saw handkerchiefs out all over the floor) in his vibrant exhortation of peace in all areas of life.—*Ruth Anderson, South Edmonton Community Church, Edmonton, Alb.*

Sessions have been tedious; pedantic people have strained at gnats and ignored the camels. Is it an effort to avoid the hard issues? As an example, I've heard of a commitment to peace, but also a fear to affirm concretely what it might mean. . . .

I've wondered, where is the trust we need to move ahead? I've been frustrated to be part of a large body trying to do detail business. That's why we elect leaders. . . . In this format, we'll be forever getting a doctrinal statement. Too many self-appointed amateur theologians—one more context where we

can't see the forest for the trees. Debate, as necessary, needs to happen in much smaller settings.—*David L. Hall, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.*

I felt a deep sense of God's presence among us, and I am encouraged. I feel God is moving us to reach out to our home front with the gospel of Jesus Christ with our Vision Planning 2000 in a more effective way. I close to say we have voted on most items with exactness and with integrity because we are a people of God.—*Beulah Arnold, Campbellsville congregation, Kentucky.*

Heard at Conference . . .

Assistant Moderator Robert Ives, referring to the great music at Conference: "The Board of Administration has been trying to think of a way to turn the business sessions into a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, so we can sing the business."

Don Shafer, General Secretary, after the Chair had ruled "the 'ayes' have it" on a unanimous voice vote: "We really appreciate the courage of the chair."

John Arthur Brubaker, several days into Conference, being asked to field yet

another question on Vision Planning: "Would you believe I prayed this morning for laryngitis?"

Don Zook, after telling of the practice of certain cemeteries which bury bankers and financiers 20 feet under: "They have found that deep, deep down, money people aren't so bad after all."

On the final day of Conference, guest speaker Sigfried Bartel: "Nobody likes defeat—not in politics, not in sports, not even in church politics." ■

. . . so obvious, we almost missed it.

A wound lies at the heart of the Messiah College campus. The land has been laid bare by huge excavation and tree removal equipment. As the 1990 General Conference progressed, participants witnessed the preparation of this parcel of land. The lumbering, smoke-spitting machines stripped layer by layer farther into the earth. The deeper they went, the more they continued to expose the roots of trees which had once sat above on the slope of the earth.

It was not a pretty sight, but was a focus of interest to passersby. Some stopped during the day to watch the men do their work of creating a more stark landscape out of what was once a gentle, green roll of hillside.

Soon the job was complete, and wooden stakes crowned with red ribbons appeared. There on the flattened earth one could see the outline of an edifice which will eventually rise to change the lives of students and faculty alike. One of these days soon, a cornerstone will be put into place.

One wonders if, decades from this General Conference

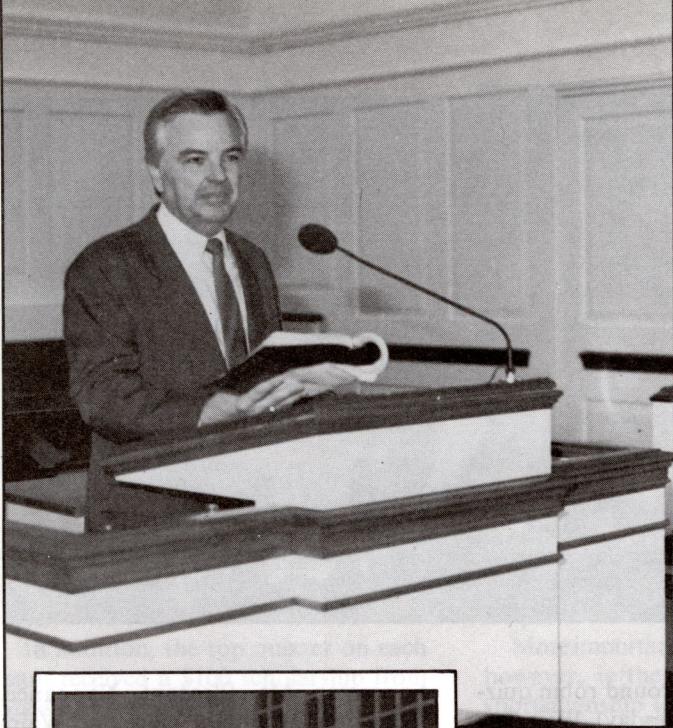
when delegates stroll the Pennsylvania campus, anyone will think about what this patch of ground used to look like. When they pass by, will they picture the trees and birds and plants as they had been before 1990? Or will they be thinking of ongoing life—classes, tests, relationships, future careers?

Someone's vision for a building—though its construction did temporary violence to the landscape—will become tangible in the months ahead. The structure will surround the lives and hopes and dreams of persons who partake of the rich education offered at Messiah College.

When General Conference returns to Messiah in four years, the dust will have settled. The building will stand erect, with people functioning within. The land will once again be packed snugly around it, replenished with bushes, trees, and a variety of living, growing things.

Such, too, is the life of the church when the cornerstone is Christ.

HJ



Congregational Life conference a success

"Growing Together: Renewing and Reviving the Congregation" was the theme of a pre-General Conference convention sponsored by the Board for Congregational Life. More than 250 persons attended the two-day sessions, held on the campus of Messiah College June 28 and 29.

Featured speaker was David R. Mains, director of The Chapel of the Air radio broadcast. His three presentations on the characteristics, process, and hope of revival were highlights of the conference.

The three worship services in the plenary sessions spanned the breadth of Brethren in Christ worship styles—from an informal service featuring choruses and Scriptures accompanied by piano and guitar, to a more formal service complete with a printed order of worship and the use of the hymnal and its worship aids.

Another highlight of the convention was the Thursday evening concert with Toni Anderson, of the Grace Community Brethren in Christ Church in Georgia. A variety of workshops and seminars, along with time for recreation, rounded out the conference.

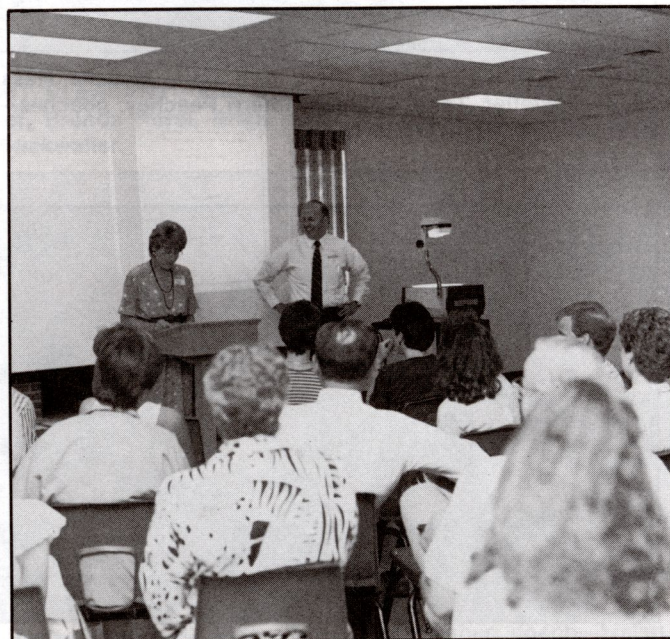


Dwight Rotz,
photographer

**Above: David Mains,
featured speaker.
Left: Toni Anderson
in concert.**



Mary Jane Davis leads a seminar on "Ministry To and For Senior Adults."



Marlene and Don Shafer's workshop, "Husband and Wife: Best Friends."

Conference quizzing at its best

by Charlie Crider

Quizzing among the first five teams at Conference in 1990 was as close as it has ever been. In addition, the three other teams made strong showings. In the final round on Wednesday night, Mechanicsburg won two quizzes from the Wainfleet A team to take the championship. Grantham, Mt. Pleasant, Lancaster, Nappanee, Wainfleet B, and Rosebank/Mountain View finished in that order.

In the preliminary round robin quizzing (Monday and Tuesday), Wainfleet A came in first, Grantham finished second, and Mechanicsburg finished third. They were followed in order by

Lancaster, Mt. Pleasant, Nappanee, Rosebank/Mountain View, and Wainfleet B.

Following the championship quiz, the top ten scorers from the round robin



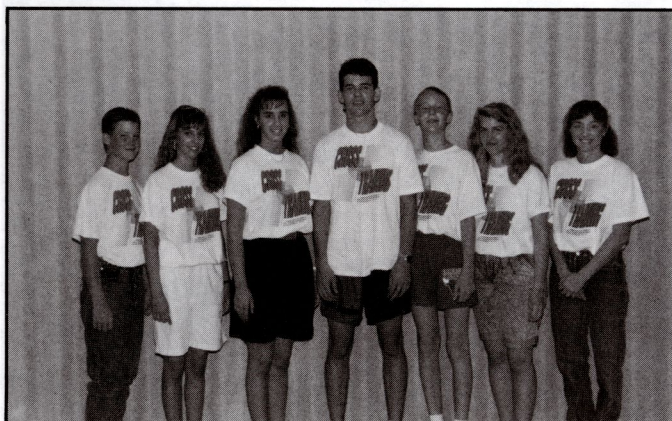
MECHANICSBURG—Chris Bert, Kim Bert, Melanie Hess, Joyce Hostetter, Tandi Lehman, Sherri Peachey; coaches—Beth Lehman, Brent Whitesel.



WAINFLEET A—Chris Cober, Jackie Denning, Heidi Kiss, Aaron Marr, Laureli Marr, Mark McPherson, Warren McPherson, James Woodland; coaches—Keith and Judy Woodland.



LANCASTER—Jenny Ernst, Kristy Ernst, Gregg Frey, Claudia Harrison, Krista Poe, Melanie Starr, Mark Wolgemuth; coach—Mark Simmons.



NAPPANEE—Carolyn Johns, Amy Moore, Mike Moore, Susan Pierce, Tim Thomas, Lloyd Williams; coaches—Charlene Meyer, Phil Brubaker.

quizzing were awarded medals, with the top quizzers receiving a plaque and a Bible presented by the Christian Light Bookstores. Anthony Book, from the Mt. Pleasant team, was honored as top quizzers. Other quizzers honored were: (2) Corrie Hess, Grantham; (3) Gregg Frey, Lancaster; (4) Chris Cober, Wainfleet A; (5) James Woodland, Wainfleet A; (6) Chris Bert, Mechanicsburg; (7) Sherri Peachy, Mechanicsburg; (8) Warren McPherson, Wainfleet A; (9) Melanie Starr, Lancaster; (10) Vickie Miller, Grantham; (11) Brenda Horst, Mt. Pleasant; (12) Kim Bert, Mechanicsburg; (13—tie) Lloyd Williams, Nappanee; Scott Woodland, Wainfleet B; (15) Sara Anderson, Rosebank/ Mountain View.

In addition, the top quizzers on each team received a \$100 scholarship from Messiah College.

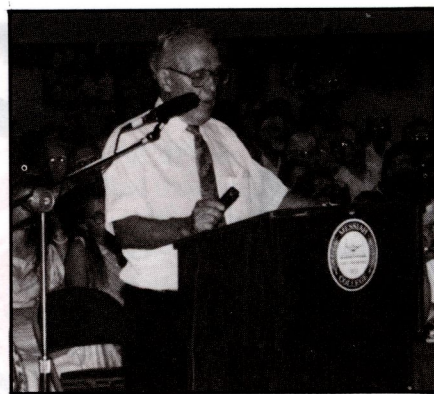
The quizzers, coaches, and officials were asked to vote for one person based on several criteria: Christian character,



Anthony Book—Quizzers' Choice Award

courtesy, friendliness, and a contributing quizzers. Anthony Book was honored by his peers with this coveted award.

More important than the above results, however, is the friendship, love, and sportsmanship that was shown among the quizzers, coaches, and officials. It was so obvious that we as officials were working with youth who were excited



Charlie Crider, quizmaster.

about being together. We pray that the quizzing program will continue to be a tool that brings our youth together through the study of the Word of God to be better prepared to serve their church.

Charlie Crider, Lancaster, Pa., is General Conference Quizmaster for the Brethren in Christ Church.



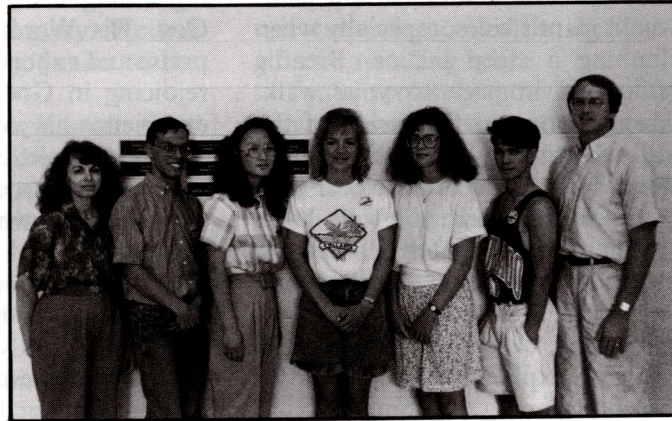
GRANTHAM—Lynsey Davis, Megan Davis, Corrie Hess, Vicki Miller, Becca Spurrier; coach—Harriet Bicksler.



MT. PLEASANT—Anthony Book, Adam Forry, David Hofstetter, Brenda Horst, Brian Horst, Kendra Price; coach—Arlin Buckwalter.



WAINFLEET B—Sharryn Cockell, Deena Heise, Sarah Marr, Amy McCombs, Scott Woodland; coaches—David Heise, Dawn Cockell.



ROSEBANK/MOUNTAIN VIEW—Mike Anderson, Sara Anderson, Grant Bell, Stacy Bell, Charla Fisher; coach—Helen Anderson.

(NOTE: Quizzers are not listed in the order they appear in these photos.)



Tuck these ten praise tips into your backpack as you prepare to climb your spiritual mountain.

Walk the path of praise

by G. Roger Schoenhals

Last summer I took my seven-year-old daughter Julie on her first back-packing trip. The two of us hiked about three miles and camped at a lake in the Cascade Mountains. As we traveled along, I found myself tutoring her on trail etiquette and the basic principles of mountain hiking.

"Take short, rhythmic steps," I instructed. "Maintain a steady pace. Avoid giant strides, especially when climbing a steep incline. Breathe often and in pace to your walk. Always move to the inside of the trail when being passed by a hiker. Never litter. Don't run. Never hike alone. Watch where you walk."

When we encountered hikers on the trail I noted aloud the differences I observed. Some breezed along with light steps; others trudged forward wearily. I explained how good physical conditioning and common sense pays off.

Roger Schoenhals and family live in Seattle, Wash.

When we returned home three days later, I reflected on our outdoor adventure. I began to find numerous connections between hiking and the Christian life, especially in relation to our calling to be a people of joy. Before long, I had a list of ten praise tips to help us walk the upward way.

1. *Follow Jesus.* Jesus leads us upward and onward. He calls us higher in our love and knowledge of God. His Word teaches us about praise and exhorts us to ground our rejoicing in God. He wants us to experience his joy so that our "joy may be complete."¹

Many self-proclaimed guides tell us to look elsewhere for happiness. "Follow me and I will lead you to joy." "Try this and you will find fulfillment." But these valley-bound "experts" are only blind guides leading the blind. Jesus only is the joy of living and in him alone can we experience the exhilaration of a truly happy heart.

Some travelers rejoice only when things go well, as if their praise

depended on circumstance. Looking unto Jesus ("the author and finisher of our faith") means that we focus our praise in him step after step after step. As we walk, we rejoice in his power, his goodness, his love. Looking unto him, we avoid the dangerous pitfalls along the way.

2. *Walk in the Light.* I once traveled on a mountain trail in pitch darkness. Only the rays of a flashlight kept me going. Then my batteries went dead and I was forced to stop and wait for the light of day. When we allow sin into our lives, the light of God's presence fades. We lose our way. Praise turns to grumbling. But repentance and faith and renewed obedience to God's Word pours light upon the path.

The path of praise is the path of obedience, of daily walking in the light of his Word. When we go where the Leader goes, and do what he says, we have reason to rejoice. We delight to do our Father's will.

3. *Stay on the trail.* My son and I were hiking on a mountain last year

Evangelical Visitor

and decided to save time by going cross country. We got ourselves in a mess and it took several hours to pick our way back to the safety of the main trail.

There are no shortcuts to a life of praise. No easy roads. Joyful discipleship requires the discipline of sticking to the basics. Faithfulness and praise go hand in hand.

4. *Travel light.* On my hike with Julie, I loaded her up with eight pounds. I bore fifty. After a mile or two I found myself re-evaluating the contents of my pack. We didn't really need that extra tarp, or that extra sweater, or that pound of bacon. We could have done fine with only one pocket knife and with less silverware. No need for that extra fishing equipment. The extra weight slowed me down.

Filling a pack with bitterness and resentment makes the going tougher. Hauling the hurts of the past hampers progress. It's hard to be a light-footed Christian when we cling to besetting sins.

5. *Consider your destination.* The best part of climbing a mountain is getting to the top. It makes all the pain and struggle worthwhile. As Julie and I walked along, I tried to describe what it would be like at the lake. The vision of our destination helped her keep moving forward.

Jesus endured the way of the cross because of "the joy set before him."² Paul pressed on because of the promised "prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."³ Pilgrim in *Pilgrim's Progress* kept going because he had caught a glimpse of the heavenly city.

We can get so downcast in our perspective that we lose sight of the summit. Our burdens are multiplied. We want to turn back. But heaven waits for the believer who endures to the end. As the gospel song says, "It will be worth it all when we see Jesus."

6. *Let Jesus carry your load.* During one stretch of trail, Julie asked if I'd carry her pack. She knew her father would help her. I reached out and took her load and freed her to walk more easily along the path.

Jesus speaks to us who are "bur-

dened and heavy laden." He invites us to share our loads with him. Peter put it like this: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."⁴

When we yield our burdens to God, we are free to walk tall and to raise our voices in praise.

7. *Stop for the pauses that refresh.* No other pause refreshes quite like a drink of cold mountain water when hiking a steep trail on a hot day. I gave such a drink to a thirsty, tired Julie and watched her enjoy it. I was reminded of Jesus and the value he places on giving a "cup of cold water" in his name.⁵

Serving others in Christ's name takes us out of ourselves and releases in us streams of praise to God. We rejoice when we are able to bring comfort to another. We are glad when the fresh waters of salvation wash clean a sinner's heart. The joy of Jesus belongs to us when we stop along the way to lend a helping hand.

8. *Enjoy the scenery.* When I'm in the mountains, the beauty of it all calls to my inner being: "Praise! Come forth!" And out from the depths bubble words of hymns like "This is My Father's World" and "How Great Thou Art."

Walking along life's pathway, we can perceive the hand of God in the circumstances of life. We can see his beauty in others. We can recognize his faithfulness and the blessings he has poured upon us.

If we let the Holy Spirit touch our eyes, we will see God's creative handiwork all around. Such magnificence will take our breath away. We will find ourselves giving praise to the Lord.

9. *Nourish yourself with good trail food.* Prayer, Bible meditation, individual and corporate worship, witnessing for Christ—these represent the nourishing manna God provides along the way. These high-energy foods keep us strong and healthy. We can go the second mile. We can make the summit.

In preparing to climb Mt. Hood last year, I put together a special trail mix of nuts, dried fruits, and other nourishing foods. I wanted a balance of good foods to keep me

going. We hikers along the path of praise need a balanced diet of God's manna to maximize our walk in Christ.

10. *Sing.* It was raining as Julie and I hiked the homeward trail. She walked in front and I grinned as I followed her—not because she looked cute marching along in her green raincoat, but because she was singing. She was composing an endless song about little feet. "Lift them up, lay them down. Roll along. Move 'em out. Let those little feet go. Even if your name is Big Foot, it doesn't matter. You've gotta keep right on moving along the trail . . ."

I smiled, too, because I noticed a relationship between her pace and her singing. When she stopped the music, she slowed down. But when she sang, she moved faster, lighter. My pace quickened as well. Her happiness helped me.

I think of Paul and Silas singing praises at midnight in the Philippian jail. I think of the Psalmist and the repeated admonitions to sing the praises of God. I think of the great hymns of the church and the lift they bring.

It's not easy to sing when the way is steep. But the Word of God tells us to assert ourselves and choose praise, to "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"⁶

Anyone can sing when the sun shines. But when the pelting rain of difficulty comes upon you, it takes a leap of faith to express praise. And when you think about it, it's only when you don't feel up to it that you can truly offer to God the sacrificial gift of a rejoicing heart.

You've probably thought of other comparisons between hiking and walking the path of praise. Add them to the list. Keep all of the pointers handy for ready reference as you travel along the upward way. I'll see you at the top!

¹John 15:11

²Hebrews 12:2

³Philippians 3:14

⁴1 Peter 5:7

⁵Matthew 10:42

⁶Philippians 4:4

"Great leaders are not born . . . they are made!" The same can be said of Christian education ministries in the local church. "Great CE ministries are not born . . . they are made!"

So what makes for a dynamic, growing Christian education ministry? While many Brethren in Christ churches are struggling with declining Sunday school attendance, some congregations are experiencing significant growth. Observation of these congregations would reveal the following key ingredients which contribute to such dynamic growth:

Prayer

What role does prayer play in your Christian education program?

One congregation begins the Family Bible Hour by asking each adult class to pray for the other classes (nursery through teens). What a difference prayer makes! Teachers report that discipline problems are decreased; children are more attentive; teachers sense an overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit . . . all because of a planned prayer time.

In another congregation, the Christian education committee has taken the lead in modelling the importance of prayer. A list of everyone serving in Christian education was compiled. This list was divided among committee members, each of whom committed to being a prayer partner to those CE workers on their list.

The pastoral prayer is another opportunity to uplift the ministries and ministers of Christian education. Some pastors choose to focus on a different CE Ministry each Sunday (e.g., nursery, jr. worship, Sunday school, clubs, youth ministries, etc.). This communicates to the congregation the importance of Christian education and prayer.

Yet another congregation prepares a bulletin/flyer highlighting all CE

On July 31 the author completed six years of service as the Canadian Conference's Associate for Field Services for the Board for Congregational Life.

Great Christian minist

ministries for that quarter. They include such information as teacher, location, topic, etc. They also include a section entitled "Prayer List." Families are encouraged to record the names of those ministering to their family during that quarter.

Some congregations feature a "Teacher of the Month" on a bulletin insert or bulletin board. Along with a photo of the teacher, a personal profile and information about the class, prayer concerns are listed. The congregation is once again encouraged to pray for those who serve.

Prayer—the first and foundational component for a dynamic and growing Christian education program. On a scale of one to ten, how do you score?

Relationships

What draws people to participate in Christian education?

Attractive classrooms, dynamic teachers, relevant curriculum, coffee and donuts? While all of these components are helpful, statistics show that the single most important factor is *meaningful relationships*.

Meaningful relationships develop as teachers spend time getting to know their students. When was the last time you sponsored a "class party"? A barbeque, swimming, bowling, hay ride, sleigh ride, trip to the zoo, make-your-own-pizza—the list is endless.

Teachers who are concerned about relationships also make student follow-up a priority. This means that absentees, newcomers, and students

celebrating special occasions receive cards, a phone call, or visit. Follow-up communicates "You matter to us!"

Teachers who understand the importance of relationships will also plan for student interaction in their teaching. We learn as we interact with others and share from our own lives. For children, this may take place through learning centers. With teens and adults, interactive methods might include: small groups, panel discussions, debates, neighbor nudges, agree/disagree statements, role play, drama, research projects, or field trips. Whether it's teaching methods, curriculum, chair arrangement, or class size, everything should contribute to building relationships.

Positive relationships between workers and those in leadership positions also contribute to growth. It is a known fact that people are more likely to serve if they can work with other people they enjoy. Thus, it is essential that you make building relationships a priority at all levels of Christian education. Do you pro-



Pontius' Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius' Puddle" from the Visitor must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.

GOAL: T
KIDS TO
READ A
WRITE.

Handwritten signatures and initials, including "Joel" and "PU".

Christian education priorities are made

by Sandi Hannigan

more an atmosphere of support? a team spirit? a good feeling about serving? On that one-to-ten scale, how well do you rate?

Finances

What priority do finances play in Christian education growth?

The area of finances is often overlooked in discussions of a growing CE program; yet, growth requires sufficient funding.

Some churches build a "bare bones" CE budget that merely covers the cost of curriculum. However, if you are serious about developing a dynamic Christian education program, there are other financial needs to consider: registration costs for teachers to attend seminars, subscriptions to relevant CE magazines, other means of support to teachers such as Appreciation Dinners, finances for new supplies and equipment, finances to keep classrooms attractive (wallpaper, paint, curtains, carpet, improved lighting, posters, etc.) and finances for future devel-

opment and growth (expanding classrooms, putting up dividers, beginning a resource center/library, etc.)

Does your Christian education budget reflect a *maintenance* or *growth* mentality? Are you willing to pay the price to have a dynamic, first class CE program, or are you trying to skimp by with the bare bones? What is your "bottom line"? How do you score in this area?

Teacher training

What is your expectation regarding teacher training? Are teachers recruited with the understanding that training is expected?

Statistics show that poorly trained teachers is one of the most common problems in Christian education. A comprehensive approach to teacher training will contribute to a healthier CE program. Trained teachers receive many benefits: greater fulfillment, confidence, motivation, and joy in their teaching; burn-out is decreased; and there are fewer discipline problems.

A congregation that is serious about teacher training will recruit with the expectation of participation in training clearly stated. They will respect the time of volunteers and provide quality training experiences.

If teachers are expected to attend conventions outside the church, support will be offered in such areas as travel, registration costs, and baby-sitting.

Those in leadership positions will be on the lookout for helpful, motivational articles, books, tapes and videos that could be shared with teachers. This type of training can occur at the teacher's convenience.

There are many other options for teacher training. The important thing is that it happens! Any warm body won't do! A growing CE Ministry depends on teachers who are growing! How do you score?

Coordination and communication

What role does coordination and communication play in growth of Christian education?

Poor coordination of programs leads to duplication in some areas and neglect in others. Poor coordination of personnel can lead to overworking some while overlooking others. Coordination is essential to staffing, program content, program scheduling, and facility use. An effective and dynamic Christian education ministry accomplishes its purposes without duplicating its resources.

Good coordination begins with good communication. Workers in one area of Christian education know what is happening in other ministries. This awareness is facilitated through a master calendar, coordinator reports, bulletin boards, church newsletters and staff meetings. They also know what is expected from them by way of job descriptions and evaluations.

Obviously, a properly functioning Christian education committee is the best guarantee of coordinated CE programs. A functional committee



Videos for Christian Education

Canadian Conference

The following videos are just a few of the many listings available for use by Canadian pastors and Christian education workers:

Children

- "McGee and Me!"—4-part series produced by Focus on the Family
- "The Selfish Giant"
- "Oak St. Chronicles"—deals with honesty, sharing, cooperation, etc.
- "Jeremiah, Esther, Paul, Jesus"

Teens

- "What is God Like? What Does the Future Hold?"—30 min.; study guide
- "It's Friday, But Sunday's Coming!"—Tony Campolo
- "You Can Make A Difference"—Tony Campolo on vocation, dating, commitment, discipleship
- "Questions of Faith"—good discussion starter
- "Fighting Fair"—Martin Luther King, Jr. dealing with conflict

Young Adults

- "Getting Your Act Together"—4-part series for single adults
- "My Son, My Son"—on homosexuality
- "The Challenge of the Disciplined Life"—video series of Richard Foster's "Money, Sex and Power"
- "Celebration of Discipline"—4-part Richard Foster video; study guide

Adults

- "Out of the Salt Shaker"—4-part series by Rebecca Pippert on personal evangelism; study guide
- "You Can Manage Your Money"—stewardship
- "You've Got to Give What You've Got"—stewardship
- "Your Money Matters"—6-part stewardship series (30 minutes each)

Small Groups/Bible Study

- "Pilgrim's Progress"
- "Tips for Reluctant Travellers"—34 minute video with study guide

Parenting/Family Life

- "Active Parenting"—6-part series
- "Communicating"—Jessie Potter
- "Parenting Teenagers"—6-part series by *Group* magazine; study guide
- "At Home With the Family"—5-part marriage enrichment series; study guide

To obtain these videos or for more information, contact:
Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Resource Centre
 50 Kent Avenue
 Kitchener, Ontario N2G 2R1
 Phone (519) 745-8458

Co-sponsored by the Board for Congregational Life of the Canadian Conference.

will set goals, evaluate, review programs and curriculum, establish policy, coordinate ministries, assist in personnel matters and always strive toward balance. What is your score in the area of Coordination and Communication?

Openness to change

What words appeal to you more . . . "same, familiar, known," or "change, unfamiliar, unknown"?

Most of us are creatures of habit. We find it easier to perpetuate existing programs than to evaluate and change directions. Often we continue a ministry because "we've always done it that way," although the needs may have changed. We hang on to old ministries and methods rather than critically asking whether new programs would better accomplish our goals.

A growing Christian education program will be open to change. As needs of people change, so too our methods and programs must be flexible to change. This may involve looking at alternatives to Sunday school, changing the times that we meet, giving our programs new names, changing the structure of our Christian education board, doing away with some ministries while beginning new ministries, changing curriculum and format. . . . What are you doing to change? How do you score?

Although many are not optimistic about the future of Sunday school, there are great opportunities for growth in Christian Education. How well are you cultivating the following ingredients which contribute to dynamic growth: prayer, meaningful relationships, sufficient finances, trained teachers, coordinated programs, communication and openness to change?

Great CE programs are not born . . . they are made. What was your score on the six areas listed above? Did you get any ideas for improvement? What are you doing (or plan to do) to make your Christian education ministries *great*? ■

God at work in our world

"I hope these people will accept me"

Norman Kase—London

The date is May 6: Kensal Rise Fellowship meets at my home each Sunday. We always put a sign on the front door: "Welcome—10:45." Today after we had begun to praise God, at 10:55 a young man came through the front door, into the hallway, and appeared at the entry door to our "chapel" in the living room. He asked whether he would be welcome and I assured him he was. As Elias led the worship with Bryan at the piano, the lad joined us in singing. As the service unfolded, he shared how he had been led to come in. He had never seen any of the many pieces of literature we've distrib-

uted and hadn't heard of us, but he had seen a "vision." As he was walking down my street across from the house he saw our "Welcome—10:45" sign and realized he had seen that in his vision. This is a young man who is trying to leave his old evil way of life, but Satan is hard after him, trying to keep him bound! He tried three times to cross the street, but twice Satan bound him. The third time he tore loose. His only thought was, "I hope these people will take me in and accept me." The interesting thing is that the message this morning had to do with how Satan tries to take people hostage and what we can do to keep him from binding us. Please pray for Jordan as we help him. Praise God that he should entrust this young man to our care.

Praise and prayer

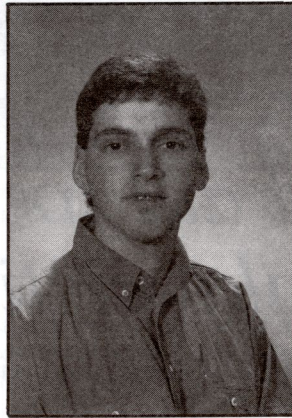
Susan Gilmore—Venezuela

Praise for:

- a dedicated church board
- a growing prayer ministry
- an active youth program
- six home cell groups
- many children, teens and adults who have accepted Christ and have been baptized
- a strong commitment in the area of tithes and offerings
- a church building that is ours where we can continue to grow
- a joyful experience when we meet together
- a caring and serving group of ladies who beautifully support the life of the congregation
- a more organized Sunday school that is enhancing the teaching ministry of the church

Pray for:

- the Gilmores as they return to North America in July 1991: for the process of reentry and for God's will for their lives.
- the Montalban congregation in the selection of new pastoral leadership
- the Brethren in Christ Church in Venezuela as it becomes more and more independent and nationalized
- the recruitment of missionary personnel who will bring the right gifts to the Venezuelan church and will also complement the existing missionary team



Cheryl, Orville Hade; Tim Albrecht begin MCC assignments

Cheryl and Orville Hade of Greencastle, Pa., are beginning three-year Menonite Central Committee assignments in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Cheryl will be working as a secretary and Orville as a soybean program leader.

Orville received a bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Alvernia College in Reading, Pa. He was last employed as manager of customer administration and services for Graham Architectural Products, Inc., in York, Pa.

The Hades are members of Five

Forks Brethren in Christ Church in Waynesboro, Pa. Their children are James, Christina and Jonathan.

Cheryl's parents are Donald and Margaret Hade of Fairfield, Pa.

Tim Albrecht of New Hamburg, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC assignment in New Hamburg, where he will work in the SELFHELP Crafts warehouse.

Albrecht previously served with Teen Missions International in Brazil. He completed grade 13 at Waterloo Oxford District Secondary School in Baden, Ont. He was last employed at Murray's Food Market in New Hamburg.

Albrecht is a member of Rosebank Brethren in Christ Church in Petersburg, Ont. His parents are Ron and Sharon Albrecht of New Hamburg. ■

Potential leaders

Nancy Peterman—Colombia

Bob and Carol Geiger have a heavy schedule of discipleship meetings. Bob also has the honor and responsibilities associated with having been voted a member of the Niza 9 Resident Council. We're hoping that his involvement and that of other committed Christians will bring us a better profile and more leverage in the community.

There's always more than enough to do. Starting last month, we've been

continued on page 20

God at work . . .

continued from page 19

working with three men: Edgar, Dario, and Tato, to help them prepare and execute the Thursday Bible study in the church apartment. Concurrently, another group of believers meets in the William Mazuera apartment on Thursday nights, with the study led by William and German, another leader being trained. There has been a rising interest in studying at the Mennonite seminary. Last trimester three persons took classes and tomorrow, when new courses start up, four more will be joining in! Pray for these potential leaders and also for the success of a youth leadership course which we hope to run in the near future.

In appreciation

Jack M. Burney of Overseas Crusades

I am writing to tell you how much I appreciate the ministry of "Youngways," the mission house in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, and of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Frey. I am with Overseas Crusades and am here in Zimbabwe for three months making arrangements for a large group of U.S. university students who will

minister in Zimbabwe for eight weeks this summer. My travels have taken me to Bulawayo several times, and I've enjoyed the fellowship and accommodations with Mr. and Mrs. Frey. They perform a real service for the Lord and for Christians from various evangelical groups.

This is my first trip to Africa and I've been impressed at how much gospel ministry has been accomplished. I visited two Brethren in Christ churches in Bulawayo: both are large, enthusiastic congregations. Two of our U.S. university students will be working with the new Brethren in Christ Church in Gweru, Zimbabwe. And there are several other evangelical groups doing work in Zimbabwe. A harvest of souls has been reaped in Zimbabwe through missionary work. Praise the Lord!

Maria

Bruce Bundy—Spain

Do you remember Maria? She is the young girl who was helping me with my Spanish and then decided to join a Catholic renewal movement group. . . . Merly wrote two letters which were not answered. So we decided to

leave the rest in the Lord's hands. If God wanted Maria to be a part of our lives, he would bring her to us.

One day toward the end of January I decided to take a different way home just for a change. . . . I sat down on the bus and to my amazement, on that very crowded bus, Maria's mother, father, and sister sat down right next to me! They didn't recognize me. Toward the end of the ride I got up enough courage in my broken Spanish to ask if they remembered me (they had met me once) and they did. Maria was back home again, and I gave them our new address and telephone number. [Since then] Maria has been taking discipleship classes from Merly. She has grown in the Lord and is witnessing to her family and friends. What a blessing it is to see a new Christian grow! We are excited!

But we were also nervous. Maria's dad is a staunch communist, atheist and . . . he doesn't like Americans. We are the first Americans and the first Christians he has ever invited to his home. The food was great and we spent about eight hours there sharing together!

As missionaries in a difficult country, we count each small step of progress forward as a blessing from above. ■

MCC to send aid to Iran earthquake victims

Mennonite Central Committee will provide material assistance to victims of the earthquake that struck northwest Iran June 21. The quake left some 50,000 dead and 100,000 homeless. MCC is accepting financial contributions designated for Iran.

MCC is providing initial emergency assistance and hopes to provide long-term reconstruction aid, says Ed Martin, who directs MCC programs in the Middle East and South Asia.

MCC initially will send 8,500 blankets, 1,500 sheets, and 5,500 pounds of bandages to Iran via the Islamic Center in Toronto. These items will be shipped from the MCC material resources warehouse in Kitchener, Ont. MCC also plans to ship medical supplies such as sutures, catheters, and antibiotics via the Islamic Center. Medical supplies will be provided by Inter-Church Medical Assistance, Inc., an organization that

provides supplies at a fraction of retail cost for relief assistance.

The Red Crescent—the equivalent of the Red Cross in Islamic countries—will receive and distribute relief supplies in Iran. "We have been told by the World Council of Churches director for disaster response that they are a very competent disaster agency," says Martin. The Red Crescent has 5,000 search-and-rescue personnel in the earthquake area, he adds, and 62 branches in the region affected by the quake.

Why is MCC, a Christian organization, providing aid through an Islamic agency? "In Iran, we don't have any of our traditional channels for providing aid," says Martin. MCC staff in Ottawa, Ont., contacted the Iranian Embassy to offer assistance; the embassy recommended sending aid through the Islamic Center. The center recognized MCC as a church agency and appreciated the

offer of help from a religious group, Martin says. The Islamic Center director commented, "You [MCC] are an agency of high moral character and not materialistic."

The Islamic Center is coordinating collection in Ontario of materials for Iran, says Martin. The Iranian Embassy in Ottawa is arranging relief flights. Embassy staff are "very happy to work with MCC," he notes. So far two flights have left for Iran and a third will go this week (July 3).

MCC is also exploring other relief possibilities. MCC has sent a letter to the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa requesting that one or two MCC workers be allowed to visit Iran to assess needs there. MCC staff will continue to talk with Iranian officials about possible long-term reconstruction.

MCC also hopes to respond to earthquake victims through the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), a long-time church partner of MCC in the Middle East. The MECC is trying to establish a direct link with Iran, probably with the Red Crescent. An MCC worker, Ed Epp, works with the MECC in Cyprus. ■

MCC U.S. worker helps bring down walls in Lancaster

"I guess I've always been interested in seeing walls come down between people," says Lloyd Bowman, MCC U.S. worker. Bowman serves as assistant director of the Lancaster (Pa.) Mediation Center.

The center, begun by a group of local attorneys in 1982, provides mediation services to people interested in alternatives to the court system. Bowman answers calls to the center, hears callers' situations and arranges mediation sessions or refers callers elsewhere.

People of all ages and backgrounds use the center's services, says Bowman. Last year the center dealt with 152 cases; 37 of them were resolved through mediation. Cases include landlord/tenant and property boundary disputes, neighborhood disagreements, business problems and others.

"Everybody is a winner with mediation," says Bowman. Disputing neighbors may go to court, for example, and a "winner" and a "loser" are established. "But the problem is still unresolved; the two parties aren't reconciled," says Bowman.

"I tell people who call here that mediation is their best option," Bowman explains. "It's fast and inexpensive. If it works, you've solved the problem. If it doesn't, you've lost nothing."

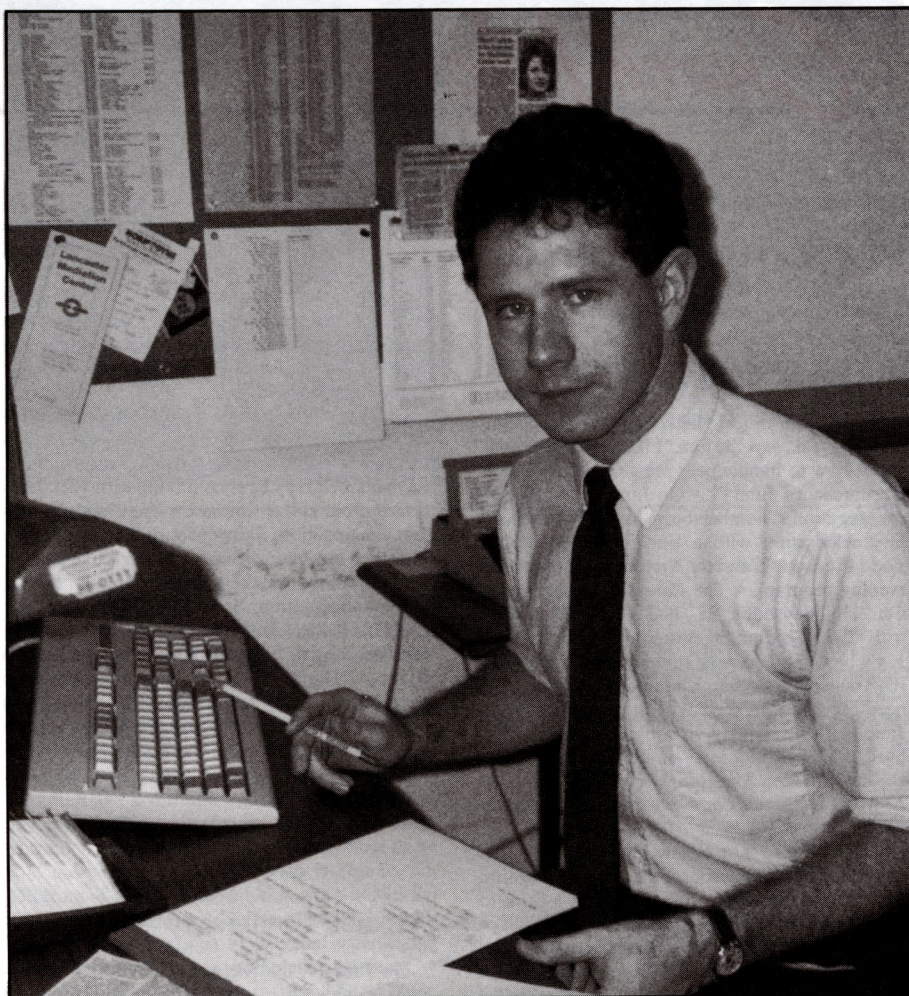
Besides arranging mediation sessions Bowman has had the freedom during his two-year MCC term to shape the direction of the center. Currently he is developing a system to follow up the mediated cases. He also hopes to clarify the center's relationship with the local court system, and he is working on refining the center's training process for its 30 volunteer mediators.

Other projects keep Bowman busy too. He contacts area schools to encourage them to take advantage of the center's conflict resolution training package for children, and he is planning a conflict resolution workshop for local social service, religious, and business groups.

Bowman, a 1988 political science

Lloyd Bowman's parents are Lee and Norma Bowman of West Virginia. Lloyd is a member of Grantham (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church.

August 1990



Lloyd Bowman, MCC U.S. Service Program volunteer, at work in the Lancaster (Pa.) Mediation Center.

graduate of Messiah College in Grantham, Pa., says he became interested in the idea of conflict resolution during his teen years, though "I didn't know it had a name until I was in college." As a pastor's son, Bowman noticed that "the Anabaptist tendency is to ignore, pass over, and avoid conflict instead of talking openly about congregational problems."

In college Bowman served on the school's judicial council, a group that dealt with campus grievances. One professor encouraged students to use mediation techniques to settle grievances. "That made an impression on me," says Bowman. His senior thesis was titled "Non-violence as a Political Strategy."

Today Bowman believes conflict, when dealt with constructively, is normal and healthy. "I've integrated the skills I've learned at work into my personal life so I know firsthand that mediation works," he says. But that does not mean it is easy, Bowman says laughing. "It takes courage for a person to decide to mediate.

It's a scary thing to make yourself so vulnerable."

Besides his work at the center, Bowman is involved in several community roles. As a volunteer with the Lancaster AIDS Project he has served as a "buddy" to a person with AIDS living in the area. He is also on the board of the Lancaster Chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, a group working to bring together people of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds.

"This MCC term has taught me about myself," says Bowman. "I've learned people skills, communication skills and my own strengths and liabilities. It's going to help me decide where to go from here."

Bowman is one of more than 50 MCC U.S. Service Program workers living in Akron, Pa. In addition to Bowman, two other volunteers work in community assignments; the rest of the team works in MCC headquarters positions or with SELFHELP Crafts. —Andrea Schrock Wenger, MCC Information Services.

Church News

Please note that this month's Church News column reflects the new alignment of conferences as approved by General Conference.

Allegheny Conference

On June 10, the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., saw the film "Like a Roaring Lion" about how to handle peer pressure. Allan Mum-mert preached June 17. • On June 17, the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg, had a 13th anniversary celebration with a brief historical report. Todd Piorkowski and the Victory Singers gave an evening program. • The **Canoe Creek** congregation, Hollidaysburg, Pa., had a June 25-29 VBS with Clara Leedom. A closing program was July 1. • The **Chambersburg** congregation is adding a sixth deacon. The church board is looking into the need for a second regular worship service. • On June 17, the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., had a commissioning service for five youth with Teen Missions assignments. June 18-22 was a children's crusade with speaker Beverly Petke.

Ken Peiffer spoke on June 13 to the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., about Satanism. The church planned a June 30 sport-a-thon to raise money for sports equipment in Zambia. • The Christ Crusaders of the **Green Spring** congregation, Newville, Pa., had a June 16 bake sale. • Lou Cober led June 16-17 missions services for the **Iron Springs** congregation, Fairfield, Pa., which included honoring Kim Jacobs for two years of voluntary service at the missions office. • Deb Patrick preached on June 3 to the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation. New Light from Messiah Col-

lege sang on June 23. • The June 11-15 VBS offering bought new speakers and a microphone for the **Montgomery** congregation, Mercersburg, Pa. • The **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., had a June 3 missions rally with Bill and Mary Hoke and Bijoy Raul. Two Sunday school classes sponsored a sausage and pancake breakfast on June 16 to raise funds for a retreat at Kenbrook Camp in September.

On June 17, Pete and Mim Stern brought international students to share their testimonies with the **New Guilford** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. Member Troy Byers is serving with Teen Mission in Poland this summer. • The **South Mountain** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., had a June 11 father-son banquet with speaker Luke Keefer, Sr. • Missions speakers in June for the **Spring Hope** congregation, Schellsburg, Pa., were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barber from Zimbabwe, and Mr. and Mrs. Morris Shirk speaking about their trip to Russia. • The **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md., recently had a Wednesday night series on "becoming more effective for Christ" and a Sunday evening series on the New Age.

Atlantic Conference

On June 17, the Richard Hiler family of Hershey provided a program of piano, organ, and French horn music for the **Conoy** congregation, Elizabethtown, Pa. • Toni Anderson gave a June 27 concert for the **Cross Roads** congregation, Mount Joy, Pa. Terry Friesen from Alberta preached on July 1. • The **Elizabethtown** congregation had a June 11-15 VBS during which children and tour guides "visited" five countries to discover the effect Jesus can have on changed lives through missionaries, native residents, and their culture. • On June 17, the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., had a father-son breakfast with Graybill Brubaker as speaker. • July 15 was farewell Sunday for Pastor Burgard of the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa.

On June 17, the **Hershey**, Pa., congregation had installation of Ric Feeney as pastor, a farewell luncheon for Earl and Lois Musser, and a church dedication service. • The **Lancaster**, Pa., congregation had a June 22-24 family camping weekend at Spruce Lake Retreat. On June 16, a team of 17 went to Diamond Street Community Center, Philadelphia, to renovate the third floor into a recreation and learning center. • On June 3, the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., had the musical "Sweet Singer" about the life of Charles Wesley as depicted by baritone Steven Kimbrough. A "Policies and Procedures for Manor Regarding AIDS" paper was presented June 6. • On June 1, members of the **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., visited residents of Mount Hope home. Two members were received on June 3.

One June 22, the youth group of the **Mt. Pleasant** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., hosted a family bowling outing. • The **Millersville**, Pa., congregation had a family night of food and fellowship on June 24. In early June, Don and Kathy Ertley

shared about their ministry in Kenya. • The Basics gave a gospel concert on June 17 for the **New Covenant** congregation, Quakertown, Pa. • The **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation had a June 7 meeting of the board with Merle Brubaker to discuss financing of their proposed building project. The board agreed to sponsor a four-person Vietnamese family. • J. Wilmer Heisey was recent centennial celebration speaker on "Pioneering with Christ" for the **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa.

On June 10, Deb Patrick spoke of her missions service in Bogota, Colombia, to the **Refton**, Pa., congregation. Todd McMichael was commissioned on June 17 for his service in Germany. • Four babies were dedicated recently at the **Shenks** church, Elizabethtown, Pa. • On June 26, workers from the **Skyline View** church, Harrisburg, Pa., distributed doorknob VBS flyers. • The **Stowe**, Pa., congregation cooperated in a June 18-22 VBS with St. Peters Church. A June 23 picnic was held on the parsonage lawn. • Marlene Lefever of D.C. Cook spoke on June 10 to the Sunday school teachers and club leaders of the **Summit View** congregation, New Holland, Pa.

A "Forty Years of Holiness" celebration was planned for July 15 at the **Tremont**, Pa., church with John Rosenberry and Luke Keefer, Sr. as speakers. • A conference reception for John and Esther Byers was planned for July 7 at the **Manor** church. Over \$6,000 was given by Atlantic Conference churches toward a September cruise on the Rhine River. • The conference Board for Congregational Life sponsored a June 7 free workshop at Kenbrook Bible Camp with Marlene Lefever of D.C. Cook Co.

Canadian Conference

The **Delisle**, Sask., congregation suspended Sunday school in July and August, adding instead a children's church ministry with videos and games. Church board members are doing informal visitation of members and adherents. • On June 3, the **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont., had a program about Mennonite Disaster Service. June 24 was the Sunday school picnic. • On June 10, the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., hosted the BCL Family Life Focus with speaker Glenn Robitaille. The theme was "parenting in the 90s." A benefit auction was June 21. • The **Kindersley**, Sask., congregation had a June 10 picnic with guests Scot and Jennifer White who left July 28 for Mexico City. Werner Zacharias preached July 1.

The June 10 sermon at the **Massey Place** church, Saskatoon, Sask., was "Kids Are Terrific." The June 17 sermon was "And then I Had Children." • Two new members were baptized June 17 at the **North East Community** church, Calgary, Alb. • The K & S group of the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., church sponsored a strawberry dessert evening June 11 with "4 Seasons" slides by Grace Pugh, and soloist Ginny McMullen. • Brian Windsor of Oasis Outreach Ministry recently challenged the **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg,

Secretarial Position Available

The Board for World Missions Office in Stevensville, Ontario, has need of a secretary/dictatypist with some managerial abilities. Applicant should have above average typing skills, computer experience (preferably WordPerfect program), excellence in spelling and grammar, and accuracy in proofreading.

This is a full-time, long-term position and is available immediately. Please call or write:

Brethren in Christ World Missions
2519 Stevensville Road
Stevensville, ONT L0S 1S0
Phone: (416) 382-3144
FAX: (416) 382-3038

Ont., to reach out to hurting and broken street people. A 90th birthday celebration was held for Mary Gracey. • The young adult fellowship of the **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation took a June 16 trip to Marineland. Sue Gilmore has a new three-year term as youth pastor.

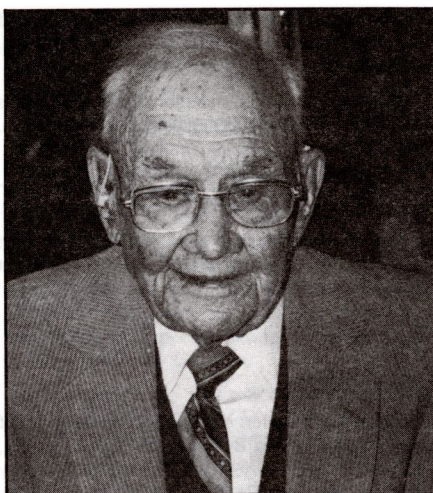
On June 2, the **Springvale** congregation, Hagersville, Ont., had a Mexican potluck supper with Karl Fretz showing slides of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns trip to Central America. • The **Stayner**, Ont., congregation recently viewed the Charles Colson film, "Loving God." • The **Upper Oaks** congregation, Oakville, Ont., had a June 24 youth day with music by Jim Lambert and a picnic at Coronation Park. • June was Sunday school recognition month at the **Wainfleet**, Ont., church with a June 10 barbecue, the June 17 viewing of "Molder of Dreams," and a June 24 picnic. • The **Welland**, Ont., congregation celebrated Cana-day on June 24 by donating canned goods, having a "sensational song time," and a seven-foot sub and games at Long Beach Conservation Area. • Five new members were received on June 3 by the **Westheights** congregation, Kitchener, Ont.

Central Conference

June 3 was Children's Day for the **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, with evangelist Joe Schultz. Lloyd Hostetler spoke on July 1. • A father-son cookout with speaker Sanford Mitchell was June 14 for the **Ashland**, Ohio, congregation. June 18-22 was the "Journeys with Jesus" VBS. • A farewell meeting with youth pastor Bill Rodebaugh was held June 10 by the **Beulah Chapel** congregation, Springfield, Ohio. • The **Bethel** congregation, Merrill, Mich., had a gospel tent meeting on June 3-17. The tent was blown down by a wind storm, resulting in the first two sessions occurring in the church building and open air. • On June 9, the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind., hosted the Central Conference quiz finals.

The Phil Thuma family had a question and answer session on June 10 with the **Fairview** congregation, Englewood, Ohio, following a carry-in dinner. The church hosted the June 26 second inter-congregational meeting of the Christian Women's Noon Fellowship with Marjorie Haines speaking on "dolls around the world." • Average attendance at the June 18-22 "Happy Trails" VBS of the **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Ohio, was 122. The members recently attended a Wednesday night series of studies on spiritual warfare. • Approximately 100 persons attended the farewell dinner recently for Pastor Ron and Marcia Smith of the **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich.

Pastor Meduri of the **Morrison**, Ill., congregation is terminating his service at the end of July. • A recent congregational council of the **Nappanee**, Ind., church authorized hiring an architect to develop plans for an addition. "Let Peace Begin with Me" was the theme of the summer Wednesday evening children's program. • An all-church picnic was June 6 for the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, congregation. Mike Short gave a brief presentation on "Fathers, Sons, and Fishing." On June 24, the congregation discussed the statement on militarism coming to General Conference. • The **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, planned a June 30-July 6 mission trip to New York. The congregation hosted a singspiration on June 24.



Celebrates 100 years

On June 10, 1990, the **Abilene** (Kans.) congregation held an open house to celebrate the 100th birthday of Jesse Hoover. Pastor Henry Landis read a paper in which Jesse reminisced about his boyhood days in Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas; the years of family life he and his wife enjoyed; and the years of service on boards and committees of the congregation. A tribute in his honor was also read in the Sunday morning worship service.

Midwest Conference

On June 17, the **Abilene**, Ks., congregation had a Community Night featuring the Larry Burkett film "Two Masters," which deals with husband and wife communication, and financial stress. • Children age 2 through grade 6 entered into the "Friendship Dimension" at the VBS of the **Bethany** church, Thomas, Okla. They learned how to be and have friends, and that Jesus is best friend. Offering of \$204 went to mission work in Mexico City. • The **Oklahoma City South**, Okla., church planting has poured a parking lot and is requesting financial assistance to complete payments. • Charles Norman preached on June 17 and 24 for the **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks. Bob and Mary Lister were installed July 8 as pastoral couple. • The **Zion** youth, Abilene, Ks., had a June 24 movie, pie, and ice cream fundraiser for summer camp in Oklahoma in July.

Pacific Conference

On June 19, the **Ontario**, Calif., congregation had a skate night. "How to Reach Your Full Potential" was a June 23 seminar on the topics discovering God-given uniqueness, understanding gifts of the Spirit, and finding personal fulfillment. • July 1 was a full day of activity for the **Pacific Highway** church, Salem, Ore., with morning speaker Denny Conant, and an evening service with Judith Angell speaking, and a game of Bible jeopardy. • The **Riverside**, Calif., congregation is exploring the idea of beginning an English class for Spanish-speaking neighbors. On June 10, the congregation saw the film "Crisis Pregnancies" following morning worship.

Southeast Conference

On June 13, the **Community Bible** congregation, Sarasota, Fla., began their weekly VBS on the theme "Children's Heroes of the Bible." Two new Sunday school classes were inaugurated in the summer. • The youth of the **Holden Park** congre-

gation, Orlando, Fla., had planned a car wash for June 23. Because of voluntary water restrictions in effect in Orange Co., a softball game and contest were planned instead. A June 24 service was held at Lake Jessamine. • Peter Vanderplogg was installed in late May as pastor of the **Naples**, Fla., congregation.

Susquehanna Conference

On July 8, Clara Leedom, missionary to Jamaica, spoke in the evening service of the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa. An offering went toward purchase of a van for her work. • A total of 215 children attended the June 18-22 "Island in the Son" VBS of the **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation. The young adults had a hike up Poles Steeple on June 9. • Fifteen persons from the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., traveled recently to Virginia to paint the home of Pastor Allison's parents. The youth had a car wash and bake sale June 2 to benefit the SWAP team going to Kentucky July 16-20. • Average VBS attendance at the **Colyer** church, Centre Hall, Pa., was 34. The offering went to purchase items for Timber Bay Children's Home.

The Harold Morris video "Twice Pardonned" was shown June 10 and 24 at the **Cumberland Valley** church, Dillsburg, Pa. • The **Dillsburg** congregation is planning a Sept. 30 Homecoming service. • The **Grantham**, Pa., congregation enjoyed a June 6 showing of the video "A Revival Account: Asbury 1970." A June 20 church supper was planned as a send-off for the youth leaving for missions service. • Jim Brubaker of Buffalo Valley Mennonite Church was speaker for the June 24 Galilean service of the **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa. • The **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., congregation had June 10 missions service with Bob and Shelley Barber from Zimbabwe. • Irvin Stern was guest soloist June 3 in the morning service of the **Messiah Village** church, Mechanicsburg. David Climenhaga spoke June 10.

The June 17 speaker for the **Morning Hour Chapel** congregation, East Berlin, Pa., was Wilson Mtebe, a national worker with Africa Inland Mission in Tanzania. • On June 10, the **Redland Valley** congregation, York Haven, Pa., viewed the

film "Gods of the New Age." Missionaries to Mexico, Scot and Jennifer White, were slated to speak July 8. • Bishop Kipe spoke in the May 30 evening service of the Wesley church, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa. The Women's Auxiliary hosted a food stand July 13-14 at a public sale.

For the Record

Births

Bullen: Patrick, May 22; Brian and Lilli (Boc-tor) Bullen, Bridlewood congregation, Ont.

Brown: Chelsea Coline, June 16; Randy and Denise Brown, Christian Union congregation, Ind.

Costello: Lindsay Anne, May 1; Roger and Tracey Costello, Welland congregation, Ont.

Creamer: Jared Michael, June 21; Jacque, Jr., and Kimberly (Drager) Creamer, Manor congregation, Pa.

Dutweiler: Blake Ryan, May 17; Jace and Debra Dutweiler, Fairland congregation, Pa.

Fetrow: Melody Lynne, May 29; William and Gayle Fetrow, Colyer congregation, Pa.

Freeman: Jessica Lynne, May 24; Al and Linda Freeman, Lakeside congregation, Alb.

Guengerich: Shara Ann, June 7; Joy and Sharon Guengerich, Chino congregation, Calif.

Haer: Kelly Louise, June 14; James and Janine Haer, Fairview congregation, Oh.

Hower: Michael Jay, June 20; Tim and Laurie (Thompson) Hower, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Huston: Norma Danielle, May 18; Dan and Carol Huston, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Krempin: Andrew Christopher, May 23; Arthur and Bonnie (Winger) Krempin, Westheights congregation, Ont.

Landis: Rebekah Marie, June 22; Ric and Debbie Landis, Carlisle congregation, Pa.

Love: Eric Robert, June 10; Rich and Tina Love, Carlisle congregation, Pa.

March: Tyler Andrew, June 11; Tim and Julie March, Carlisle congregation, Pa.

Parthemore: Courtney Lynn, June 17; Ron and Angie Parthemore, Carlisle congregation, Pa.

Piett: Rebecca Daniel, May 25; Michael and Michele (Winger) Piett, Bertie congregation, Ont.

Potter: James Lowell, May 30; Ron and Melody (Brown) Potter, Heise Hill congregation, Ont.

Rudy: Jonathan Patrick, May 31; Craig and Beth (Gregg) Rudy, Manor congregation, Pa.

Sallans: Mallory Ann, May 21; Jeff and Tammy Sallans, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

Schaeffer: Whitney Suzanne, June 1; David and Wendy (Barrett) Schaeffer, Summit View congregation, Pa.

Schiffbauer: Elizabeth Ann, May 27; Duane and Susan (Zook) Schiffbauer, Abilene congregation, Ks.

Shirk: Erin Joy, May 21; James and Sherri (Kurtz) Shirk, Summit View congregation, Pa.

Thomas: Hillary Jules, June 12; Donald and Deborah (Llanso) Thomas, Manor congregation, Pa.

Weller: Jonathan Anderson, June 15; Dennis and Sally Weller, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

Wilke: Jessica Lynn, May 17; David and Bonnie (Winger) Wilke, Sherkston congregation, Ont.

Zimmerman: Joshua Michael, May 21; Robert and Susan (Burger) Zimmerman, Mt. Pleasant congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Baker-Burkholder: Andrea Lynne, daughter of Ronald and Donna Burkholder, Mechanicsburg, Pa., and Bradley Roy, son of Eugene and Dorothy Baker, Lancaster, Pa., May 26, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Cathedral with Rev. Richard McCandless officiating.

Batten-McClain: Jennifer, daughter of Charlotte McClain, Florida, and Jeffrey Allan, son of Jerry and Lenna Batten, Arcanum, Ohio, June 16, at the home of Harve and Robyn Bowman with Rev. Clark L. Miller officiating.

Breon-Little: Kathleen Rose Little, daughter of Dorothy Swartz and the late Frank Swartz, Port Royal, Pa., and Dennis Scott, son of Willis and Kay Breon, Reedsville, Pa., June 9, at Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. W. Dale Allison officiating.

Clark-Funk: Dawn Louise, daughter of Wayne and Jean Funk, Cleona, Pa.; and David A., son of Hayes A. Clark, Mt. Gretna, Pa., and Sandra E. Fisher, Lebanon, Pa., May 26, at Fairland Brethren in Christ Church with Dr. Vernon Bosserman officiating.

Cripps-Scriver: Sharon Louis, daughter of Morley and Eva Scriver, Glen Huron, Ont., and Ian Charles, son of Douglas and Helen Cripps, Stayner, Ont., Mar. 25, at Stayner Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Darrell Winger officiating.

Duffey-Angle: Melody Ann, daughter of Malcolm and Jane Angle, Waynesboro, Pa., and Jeffrey Lynn, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Duffey, May 12, at Fairview Ave. Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Lynn Thrush officiating.

Herr-Henry: Michelle L., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Henry, Jr., Peach Bottom, Pa., and Ronald C., Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald C. Herr, Sr., Holtwood, Pa., June 23, at Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Omer E. King officiating.

Hess-Kolessar: Margaret-Ann Kolessar, daughter of Fred and Bertha Wilds, Willow Street, Pa., and Brian Lee, son of Abe and Jane Hess, Conestoga, Pa., June 16, at the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. James Haun and Rev. Omer E. King officiating.

Hinten-Smith: Michelle Rene, daughter of Bob and Jackie Smith, Laura, Ohio, and Richard Jay, son of Joe and Brenda Hinten, West Milton, Ohio, June 9, at the Highland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Clark L. Miller officiating.

Martin-Kreiser: Karen Lea, daughter of Richard and Edna Kreiser, Annville, Pa., and James and Rose Kneasel, Carlisle, Pa., May 5, at the Fairland Brethren in Christ Church with Dr. Vernon Bosserman officiating.

McAlpine-Millar: Victoria Leanne, daughter of Ray and Karen Millar, Maniwaki, Quebec, and

Raymond Francis James, son of Harold and Beatrice McAlpine, Toronto, Ont., June 23, at Chartwell Baptist Church with Rev. Craig E. Sider officiating.

Means-Barnhart: Mary Mae Barnhart and John Means, June 9, at the Fahrney-Keedy Memorial Home for the Aged, Hagerstown, Md.

Mellot-Martin: Joan Martin, Marion, Pa., and Daryl Mellot, Mercersburg, Pa., May 11, at First Presbyterian Church, Winchester, Va.

Palmer-Rittenour: Gail Dawn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy A. Rittenour, Breckenridge, Mich., and Dale Elias, son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell H. Palmer, North Branch, Mich., June 2, at General Squire Park with Rev. Bedsaul Agee officiating.

Plasterer-Peters: Holly Faith, daughter of Gary and Carrol Peters, Chambersburg, Pa., and Steven Lynn, son of Harold and Miriam Plasterer, St. Thomas, Pa., June 23, at St. Thomas Assembly of God Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Tillis-Carbaugh: Sonja Carbaugh and Charles Tillis, May 26, at Zullinger Community Center with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

Vander Bent-Cober: Sheri Lynn, daughter of Bruce and Pauline Cober, Wellesley, Ont., and Larry Bruce, son of Bruce and Mina Vander Bent, Unionville, Ont., May 19, at Rosebank Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Rick Silvestro officiating.

Whittington-Horst: Patricia Ann Horst, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Shank, Chambersburg, Pa., and Gregory Eugene, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Whittington, June 16, at the home of the bride with Rev. Robert G. Byers officiating.

Zeis-Carbaugh: Betty Michelle Carbaugh, daughter of Dean and Margaret Christman, Mercersburg, Pa., and Roy Eugene, Jr., son of Roy and Margaret Egolf Zeis, Mercersburg, May 26, at Mt. Tabor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Roy E. Brake officiating.

Obituaries

Applegate: Neva S. Applegate, born July 21, 1901, daughter of Owen M. and Tena Merilatt Shirk, died Jan. 4, 1990. Preceding her in death was her husband, Oscar. Surviving are two children, Jack, and Donna Bell; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and a sister, Leone Bare. In 1929, she became postmistress for Ramona, Ks., then was a rural route carrier. She was employed by a local bank until age 84. The funeral was held at the Rosebank church where she was a member, with Rev. Charles Norman and Rev. Jesse Dourte officiating. Interment was in Lewis Cemetery.

Clark: Hugh B. Clark, born June 3, 1902, died June 2. Surviving are a son, Charles H.; two sisters, Cordelia Weathers and Ollie Korth; four grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. Hugh was a member of the Messiah Village church where the funeral service was held with Rev. J. Robert Lehman officiating. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Gardens.

Fike: J. Kenneth Fike, born Oct. 15, 1915, son of Joseph K. and Pricilla Hostetter Fike, died Jan. 20, 1990. Preceding him in death were an infant son and a daughter, Carolyn. Surviving are his wife, Naomi; 2 sons, Joseph K. and Steve; a daughter, Virginia Boyer; 10 grandchildren; a great-grandchild; and 3 sisters, Sue Fike, Vera Burkholder, and Ida Ringey. He was a farmer, a

past member of the Tri-County Telephone Board, and the Romona school board. He was a member of the Rosebank congregation, Ks. Rev. Charles Norman and Rev. Jesse Dourte officiated at the funeral. Interment was in Lewis Cemetery.

Gangi: Mary B. Gangi, born Feb. 10, 1902, died June 14. Surviving is a brother, Harry D. Rodgers. She was a member of the Messiah Village church, Mechanicsburg, Pa. The service was held at the Zimmerman-Auer Funeral Home with Rev. Theodore Yohe and Rev. J. Robert Lehman officiating. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Gardens.

Hensel: Irene E. Hensel, born Nov. 3, 1905, daughter of Herman and Alice Fry, died June 13. Surviving are her husband, John S.; a brother, Charles B. Fry; a sister, Anna B. Brubaker; and several nieces and nephews. Irene and her husband served 27 years in the office of deacon at Messiah Home, Harrisburg, Pa., and 9 years in the same role at Messiah Village Church where they were

members. The funeral service was held at the church with Rev. J. Robert Lehman and Rev. Avery Musser officiating. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Gardens.

Robison: K. Marion Robison, 81, died May 28. He is survived by his wife, Edna; and a son, Jerry; one grandchild; and three sisters, Elva Stevens, Nell Hansen, and Alice Hahn. He worked as a millwright at Monarch Food Processors until retirement in 1974 and was a charter member of the Pacific Highway congregation, Ore. The funeral service was held at the Howell-Edwards-Doerksen mortuary with Rev. Danny Sanders and Rev. Art Cooper officiating. Interment was in Restlawn Memory Gardens.

Steadman: Myra Jessie Steadman died May 15. She was the mother of Dan, Bill, Lois, Ruth, Olive, Nancy, and Julie. Also surviving are 31 grandchildren, and 23 great-grandchildren. She was the first convert of the Oak Ridges Church, Ont. ■

Network established for HIV+/AIDS individuals and families

Citing a need for support within the church for persons who are HIV+ or living with AIDS, a group of Lancaster County (Pa.) Mennonites, Brethren, and concerned individuals has started a continent-wide hotline.

The "Brethren/Mennonite Connection" is for any individual who feels isolated or needs additional support dealing with AIDS.

"HIV+ individuals, persons with AIDS, and their relatives need a group to which they can turn for information, emotional, and spiritual support, and other kinds of assistance," Urbane Peachey, the group's facilitator and senior pastor of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church explained. "One should not need to go through this traumatic experience in isolation. We want to let families in our churches know there are groups where it is safe to discuss the situation."

An HIV+ individual is someone whose body has been infected by the AIDS virus but who has no symptoms of the disease.

Doris Kolb, a public health nurse in Lancaster, initiated the group in November 1988. Kolb called the group together at the request of her friend, David Dutcher, who was living with AIDS at the time. After Dutcher's death the following January, the group continued to meet and explored ways it could respond to AIDS. ■

Kolb explained that the Brethren/Mennonite Connection is for persons in the church who don't know with whom they can talk. "They need someone in the church who can be nonjudgmental," she said. "The purpose is to allow them to talk one-on-one with people who are in similar situations, people who can listen and be supportive."

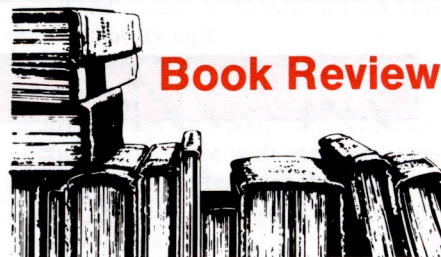
The group consists of persons from the church community who are sensitive to the issues surrounding AIDS and may either be living with AIDS or supporting someone who is.

The group hopes to expand its knowledge of individuals across the country who can provide emotional support to those in similar situations. It plans to refer callers to other persons with whom they can develop a supportive relationship if the caller desires. If the individual is in need of basic information about AIDS, he or she will be referred to the closest local resource.

"We feel it is important to learn how to speak together about this situation and learn to share emotionally and spiritually in this burden," Peachey said.

The phone number is (717) 393-7140 and is open to persons from all parts of North America. Hours will vary, so when it is not staffed an answering machine will provide information where and when calls will be taken. The phone line is strictly confidential and a caller need not give his or her name.

In addition to establishing a Brethren/Mennonite Connection telephone line, the group is planning an educational forum in early November for individuals in the Lancaster County area. The group is also investigating ways of becoming directly involved individuals who are living with AIDS. ■



Missionary Reminiscences, by Lewis Sider. 1989. Paper, 138 pages. Available for \$5.85 (U.S.) from the author, 522 Dogwood Dr., Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Reviewed by Harvey R. Sider.

Lewis Sider's autobiography *Missionary Reminiscences* is the story of a man devoted to the Lord, his family, the church, and the people he served. As one reads Sider's journey, the sense of his deep devotion and genuine commitment stand in stark contrast to the self-centered spirit of our age.

Serving Christ and the church became a high priority early in life. His ministry in rural Saskatchewan, his availability to teach at Jabbok Bible School, his three terms of service in Africa, and the response to a need leading back to Africa in 1975, all demonstrate his desire to be faithful. The bottom line was to know and then to do the will of the Lord. This principle extended to every area of Sider's life. He gave not only of his time and energy. The sharing of his financial resources, even when at \$15 per month (1943) he couldn't afford to tithe, illustrates his commitment.

The family was always a primary concern. Perhaps Sider's humanity became most evident as he wrestled with issues that impacted family life. Living conditions in northern Saskatchewan were extremely difficult, causing him to struggle with an appropriate response to family needs. But even more difficult were the hard decisions that had to be made about the education of his children. Particularly painful was the occasion when son John was left in Canada to complete high school while the family returned to Africa.

The lack of resources while in home and overseas missions often took its toll. Reentry into western society and securing of work were painful. He depicts the repeated picture of God's servants who struggle with lack of adequate support, separation from family, and the cost of commitment.

The description of some of Sider's African friends displays his love for those among whom he worked. He has

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A personal testimony

by Harvey R. Sider

One of my vivid memories is the grinding poverty of childhood. Yet the "great depression" did not dampen the joy of our Christian home. We learned at an early age that money was not the creator of enjoyment.

During the first 10 years of my life, money was measured more in terms of pennies, nickels, and dimes rather than dollars. When ice cream cones cost a nickel and gasoline sold for 5 cents a litre, 25 cents to spend on Christmas gifts seemed like a fortune.

In the midst of joy and poverty, our parents faithfully taught that all we had, we received because of God's grace (1 Chronicles 29:14, Matthew 6:25-34, 2 Corinthians 8 and 9). This translated into a positive understanding of tithing. No matter how small the job or pay—picking bugs off potato plants at a dime for 100, scraping chipped paint at 5 cents an hour so dad could quickly refinish the surface, hoeing endless rows of turnips—the first penny of every ten belonged to God.

To take 10 percent out of any amount earned soon became "second nature." Each time, "the Lord's money" was placed first in his box. By the time I was 10 years old, mother had stopped giving me Sunday school money; I had earned my own offerings to take to church. Regardless of how little I had earned or had to give, what a delight to be able to give back to the Lord that which he enabled me to earn in the first place.

The sad side to this story is that I became stuck in a rut, satisfied for years that tithing was the norm for joyful Christian living. This meant that I was giving the same, proportionately, when I served as an elementary school principal at the handsome salary of \$4,000 a year (in 1957) as when I earned 5 cents an hour (in 1938). Decades later, it seems totally incredible that my understanding of sharing had not stretched in those 20 years.

Ultimately a number of things moved me to change my whole perception of money. I here identify only 3 of these:

- a. Living in India among people whose per capita income was about \$10.00 per month ('62-'74) showed Erma and me a different side of wealth. These people were so poor that it hurt to receive from them. In their generosity and desire to practice hospitality, they would borrow tea if we came to their home. We often left feeling guilty, for out of their desperate poverty they provided first for us. Yet refusing hospitality they could ill afford would have been an insult.

If out of extreme poverty they could be so generous, how could I justify giving only a tenth of my wealth? How stingy could I be! Furthermore, to spend money

unwisely on consumer goods would be unfair to the majority of the world's people, for whom even the bare necessities of life, shelter, food, and clothing are often lacking.

- b. Normally, over a long period of time, inflation makes money virtually worthless. Then why try to accumulate money (which was one of my goals as a principal) when it will have little value 25 years from now? The impact of Christ's words began to hit me. In today's language we would say "lay not up for yourself treasures on earth—where inflation destroys."
- c. A growing consciousness of my own Christian responsibility for wealth came simultaneously with an increasing income and decreasing financial obligations. As I read books like *Money and Power* (Ellul), *God's Miraculous Plan of Economy* (Taylor), and *Freedom of Simplicity* (Foster), and became exposed to the stories of people who had broken through the tithing syndrome, I began to realize that liberation from the power of money included freedom to give as God prospered rather than following the Old Testament formula of tithing.

This translated into wanting to find places within the Brethren in Christ where I could enjoy giving a higher percentage of my income to the Lord, through my local church and Cooperative Ministries.

Increase in proportionate giving was a growth process. Over a span of eight years, the Lord enabled me to move from the tithe to an annual giving rate of about 50 percent of my gross salary. It is a delight to share this new phase of my life with a church that has meant so much to me.

Erma and I praise God for his leading and enabling. What we have done is not praiseworthy; it is a simple response to God's goodness in so many ways. What a small way to express our gratitude for a wonderful Lord and Savior, a great church that has provided many opportunities for ministry, a healthy supportive Christian family, and more than we deserve of this earth's material resources. The debt we owe for all these blessings can never be repaid by money. But the joy of giving is one avenue of saying thanks!

This testimony was written at my request by Harvey Sider, who is completing his second term as bishop of the Canadian Conference and was installed as Moderator of the Brethren in Christ Church at the July General Conference.—Merle Brubaker (Director of Stewardship and page editor for "Money Matters")

BOOK REVIEW

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few disparaging words, even for those with whom he came in conflict. At the same time, he recognizes that missionaries do have their times of disagreement and discouragement.

Reminiscences shares interesting insights about the African and missionary

way of life during the first half of this century. Sider goes into some detail as he reveals how our early missionaries carried out their tasks, the development of the Brethren in Christ schooling system in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the Jubilee celebration with guests Wolgemuth and Hostetter. The 12 pages of photographs at the end of the "story"

assist the reader in "seeing" mission life half a century ago.

Excessive detail at times tends towards tediousness. To maintain interest, one tends to gloss over (skip through) these sections. But those with overseas experience, or with interest in the details of Sider's family life, will appreciate *Reminiscences*. ■

Messiah College News

Messiah honored as character building college

Messiah College has been selected to appear on the John Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges for 1990. The honor roll is an annual listing of those schools which "best exemplify campuses that encourage the development of strong moral character among students."

Messiah is one of 102 on this year's honor roll. The honor roll was compiled by polling college and university presidents and directors of development of all four-year, accredited institutions of higher education across the country.

The honor roll is sponsored by John Marks Templeton and the John Templeton Foundation. It is their hope that conferring this honor might be of help to future college students and their parents, as well as those whose generosity supports higher education.

The John Templeton Foundation has commissioned Marketing Research Institute (MRI) to conduct the annual poll and publicize results. In addition to press releases, MRI is also compiling a brochure of the 1990 honor roll which will include a brief overview of those schools included. The brochure is made available to schools on the honor roll for use with prospective students.

Incoming students awarded Dean's, President's, Founder's Scholarships

Messiah awards a number of worthy incoming students with a Dean's or President's Scholarship. Dean's Scholarships of up to \$2,000 per academic year are awarded to students who have excelled in their high school coursework. President's Scholarships of up to \$1,500 per academic year are awarded to new students who have distinguished themselves in academic, co-curricular, church, and community endeavors.

The following Brethren in Christ freshmen have received one or both of these scholarships:

Stacy L. Bell, Colorado Springs, Colo.;

Dean's

Christopher I. Bert, Mechanicsburg, Pa.;

Dean's

Deborah L. Brandt, Llewellyn, Pa.;

Dean's

Philip Brubaker, Arcanum, Oh.; Dean's

President's

Mark H. Erb, Manheim, Pa.; Dean's

Matthew Erb, Manheim, Pa.; Dean's

Jeffrey C. Erikson, Dillsburg, Pa.;

Dean's

Andrew R. Fisler, Dillsburg, Pa.; Dean's

Carla L. Heisey, Manheim, Pa.; Dean's

Kenneth L. Hofstetter, Mount Joy, Pa.;

Dean's

Nancy L. Huber, Annville, Pa.; Dean's

President's

Jared E. Keefer, Dillsburg, Pa.; Dean's

Michelle E. McNiven, Stevensville, Ont.,

Canada; Dean's

Lynn E. Myers, Orrstown, Pa.; Dean's

Richard A. Neff, Mechanicsburg, Pa.;

Dean's

Rena J. Peachey, Belleville, Pa.; Dean's

Eric J. Poe, Montoursville, Pa.; Dean's

Jason Richwine, Carlisle, Pa.; Dean's

Rena F. Shelly, Grantham, Pa.; President's

Rebecca R. E. Smeltz, Lewisburg, Pa.;

Dean's

Andrew L. Steckbeck, Mount Joy, Pa.;

Dean's

Julie M. Stone, Williamsburg, Pa.;

Dean's

Gordon A. Thorton, Fort Erie, Ont.,

Canada; Dean's

Chadwick L. Warfel, Leola, Pa.; Dean's

J. Jay Zuck, Calgary, Alb., Canada;

Dean's

In addition to these scholarships, 10

prestigious Founder's Scholarships are given each year. These scholarships are awarded annually to incoming freshmen

who have distinguished themselves as outstanding leaders in the classroom as well as in co-curricular activities.

Philip Brubaker, who also received both of the above scholarships, was chosen to receive the Founder's Scholarship for the 1990-1991 school year. Brubaker is a 1990 graduate of Arcanum High School in Ohio. He plans to major in Christian education at Messiah. Among his high school achievements were awards in science and English, being named Student of the Month, placing third in the Ohio Test of Scholastic Achievement in geometry, and First Place in the Darke County tests in the physical science and biology categories.

New Vice President for College Development

Charles W. Phillips, previously chief development officer at Covenant College in Tennessee, was appointed Vice President for Development at Messiah earlier this summer, and began his duties July 2.

Prior to his service at Covenant he served on the development staff of The Stony Brook School in Stony Brook, Long Island, New York. Phillips graduated from Middlebury College with a double major in English and history. He was a College Scholar at Middlebury and was elected Phi Beta Kappa. He and his wife Deborah have four children ages 1 to 8 years.

Philadelphia campus Dean's list announced

Spring Dean's List honors went to 17 students at the Philadelphia campus of Messiah College this year. One of the 17 students was Brethren in Christ: David Pierce, a junior from Nappanee, Ind., majoring in civil engineering. ■

Focus on the Bible

Twelfth in a series written by
faculty members of Messiah College

The Bible and theology

by Douglas Jacobsen

Christians typically use two different styles of speech to talk about their faith: the language of the Bible and the language of theology. The language of the Bible is largely composed of stories, poems, and short quotable sayings. Its language is rooted in the life experiences of the people of ancient Israel and the early church, and it is drenched with both mystery and awe in the presence of God. The language of theology is, by contrast, rooted in the realm of philosophy and logic. It seeks to state the truths of the faith in an abstract and universal manner—in a way that transcends any one particular individual's limited experience of God.

Many Christians favor the language of the Bible over the language of theology because it seems closer to them. Throughout the history of the church, however, Christians have often been forced to recognize that the language of theology is also important. Theological language grows out of the language of the Bible and is related to the Bible in three different ways. First, theology is an attempt to *codify* the message of the Bible. Second, theology is a necessary part of *communicating* the message of the Bible. Third, theology seeks to *correlate* the truths we know from the Bible with other truths we have also discovered.

Douglas Jacobsen is Associate Professor of Church History and Theology at Messiah College. He, his wife Rhonda, and their three children (ages 7-12) live in Grantham and attend St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Mechanicsburg, Pa.

The Bible is not a systematically organized book. If we would discover what the Bible teaches about any one thing, we must pull together a wide range of passages from many different portions of Scripture. A beginning way to codify or systematically organize the message of the Bible can take the form of a topical concordance which lists Bible passages under subject headings. Theology proper takes this process several steps further and seeks (after having analyzed each passage in context) to articulate the unified message of the Bible as a whole with regard to these different subjects.

Typically theologians have focused their thinking on the "big ideas" of the Bible—categories like God, the Holy Spirit, salvation, or sanctification. In recent years theologians have also found it important to focus on "smaller concerns"—subjects like the theology of work, or the theology of play, or the theology of children's ministry.

Theological attempts to codify the message of the Bible can also be done in a more holistic way, seeking to organize the message of the entire Bible around a given central theme or concern. Theology done in this manner has produced different major "schools" of theology. These different kinds of theology have names like Calvinistic theology, or Wesleyan theology, or liberation theology. Each of these theologies centers on one particular insight about God (for example, Calvinism's emphasis on the sovereignty of God) and uses this as a unifying theme to weave together the message of the Bible as a whole. These biblically holistic theologies are helpful for organizing our thinking about God, the world, and humanity; but because they so neatly codify our thinking, they can also become blinders that let us read the Bible only in ways that reinforce a certain point of view. This is an obvious danger in all systematic presentations of theology.

Theology also helps us communicate the message of the Bible. The Bible came into existence in ancient Semitic culture. That was the original audience of the Bible and it is written in the idiom of

that culture. When we seek to translate the message of the Bible from the languages of the Bible into the language of our own culture or some other contemporary culture, we cannot simply translate words and phrases. If we truly want to communicate the message of the Bible, we must find modern cultural equivalents for the ancient cultural forms that carry the message of the Bible.

This process is at the heart of the theology and it has been going on for centuries. Many of the classic definitions of Christian orthodoxy grew out of the attempt to translate Hebrew concepts of God into the language of fourth- and fifth-century Greco-Roman culture. The development of our understanding of God as a Trinity and of Jesus as fully human and fully divine were arrived at in this way. These two ideas are not found in this exact form in the Bible, but they validly summarize the teaching of the Bible on these points. These classic formulations of the faith were also important means of communicating the message of the Bible to a different culture than that in which it was formed. This same kind of development might still be possible today when the gospel enters new cultures.

Finally, theology seeks to correlate what we know to be true from the Bible with what we have also come to believe is true from other sources of knowledge. At Messiah College we often call this aspect of theology "the integration of faith and learning." Since we believe that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, revealed to us in the Bible, is the God of all creation, we assume that our experience of the world and our reading of the Bible should fit together. What makes this difficult business is that sometimes things don't seem to fit together at first glance—or even at a second or third glance.

When "learning" and the Bible (i.e., "faith") conflict, we find ourselves in a difficult spot. Often Christians have simply denounced learning and taken their stand on the Bible alone. Because we are fallen creatures, much of what we presently take to be "learning" will undoubtedly someday appear as nothing more than mistaken opinion, and our

decision to jettison learning will have been proved correct. However, we may also find that *our reading* of the Bible was what was mistaken (not the Bible itself), and we should have listened with more care to what "learning" was trying to teach us so that we could read the Bible more accurately.

It is the job of theology to try to strike a wise and godly balance in this area of correlating the truths of Scriptures with other truths of learning. Sometimes this area is called speculative theology because we have no clear revealed answer to our questions. Because this kind of theology includes many ideas that don't have a direct biblical basis, we must be very careful about the kinds of claims we make. We cannot simply avoid this kind of theology, however, for we all do believe things in addition to the truths of the Bible (e.g., sickness is caused by microbes, democracy is good, the atom can be split, etc.) and we all do at times think about how these things are related. The art of this kind of theology is simultaneously to remain faithful to the biblical text, be humble in our assertions, and use our knowledge of both the Bible and the world in general to do God's work while God gives us life. ■

The Way of Peace

a column for
Christian
peacemakers

The Statement on Militarism which the Board for Brotherhood Concerns (BBC) brought to the 1990 General Conference was referred back to the board for further study and grassroots discussion. Even though the board thought we had followed a thorough process for allowing input into the content of the statement (see the article "Making a Statement" in the June *Visitor*), there were people who felt either that they had not been given the opportunity to voice their concerns or that their concerns had not been heard.

Therefore, over the next biennium the BBC will continue to facilitate dialogue on the issue of militarism in general, and the proposed "Statement on Militarism" in particular. It is quite likely that the statement that comes to General Conference in 1992 will be different from the one we have now. We invite anyone who is interested to participate in the discussion over the next two years.

Exactly what shape that discussion will take has not yet been determined,

but the BBC is committed to making deliberate efforts to involve as many people as we can at regional and local levels. We believe that discussion on militarism and how we respond to the biblical call to be peacemakers is one of many important issues we face as a church, and we want people to feel involved in the discussion.

If you have suggestions for how we can facilitate discussion, please let us know. If you need a copy of the statement in its current form, please write for a copy. Whatever your views, we'd like to hear from you. You can write to one or both of the following: Richard Zercher (chairperson of the BBC), 861 Ashbury #2, San Francisco, CA 94117; Harriet Bicksler (Director), Board for Brotherhood Concerns, P.O. Box 246, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

The Way of Peace column is a project of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns.

Onesimus

Dear Paul:

Recently, I have reread your letters to the churches with special attention to all you have to say about prayer. I am equally intrigued over the kinds of things that you say we should pray about, and the commonly perceived needs that you don't mention. You have asked the Lord for at least 10 kinds of spiritual blessings, but there is a notable lack of mention of material things. You have been plagued with health problems, you are in prison; no doubt you are sometimes hungry, cold and bored. The churches here are praying that your sufferings may be alleviated, and that you may soon be on the road again, helping to get the gospel out to all the world.

But when I read again your list of priorities, I see how important the things of the Spirit really are. Wealth and physical comfort we can take or leave, but even an hour spent without an awareness of Christ's presence can plunge our

souls into darkness. You pray that we will seek God's will in everything and that we will carry it out with the wisdom that comes from above; that our lives will be spent in being kind and doing good; that we won't pitch our tents on spiritual plateaus, but that we will always seek to know God better, so that his strength will keep us on the move no matter what happens. You ask that we will live our lives with joy, thankfulness, and the certainty that comes from experiencing Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit; most of all, that love will be the bond that knits us all together.

These things are the absolute essential of a vibrant Christian life, and we need to pray for them constantly so that we won't lose them. I commend you, Paul, for lifting our sights above the mundane level on which so many of the Lord's spoiled children operate. You are equally unimpressed by the ascetics and the

comfort seekers. You can afford to wait until you get to heaven for many of the joys that most of us want right away.

I was surprised to notice that you did not ask us specifically to pray for the salvation of the lost, although you asked that you might be able to preach to them with freedom and power.

I think I understand your thought. When the people of God become mature, expressing the true nature of Christ, the world will see and understand, and sincere seekers will be drawn to the true faith. I fear that sometimes we turn away the noblest of the pagans by our bickering and mean-spiritedness. Demonstrations of God's power to change lives must accompany proclamation, if the kingdom is to spread.

Thank you for helping me see this.

Onesimus

Questions of identity and process

As I sat in General Conference this year, I noticed that women were significantly involved: women were major sponsors of key issues, delivered a theme sermon, debated issues and made motions, etc. It seems to me that the church is making progress in identifying and incorporating the gifts of women in the life of the church. That's part of the good news of Conference. For me, however, there were other issues that made Conference particularly frustrating this year.

Someone sitting close to me during the sessions remarked that this Conference was internally rather than externally focused. As I thought about the truth of the observation, I decided it was appropriate considering the theme of "This We Believe" and the discussion of the proposed new doctrinal statement. But it was more than that—in some ways we seemed to be struggling with basic identity issues. Who are we? Who or what do we want to be as a church? Will we retain or shed some of the theological (and methodological) distinctives of the past? What are our priorities?

These questions about identity were reflected not only in discussion of the doctrinal statement; they also surfaced in debate on the militarism statement and the Vision Planning proposals, and they were implied in some of the discomfort over the process of debate.

For me the most frustrating part of the process of Conference was the frequency with which the previous ques-

tion was moved, thus cutting off debate. On three separate occasions, debate on significant issues with far-reaching implications was prematurely ended because someone decided it was time to get on with things. On two of those occasions, the debate had just returned to the main motion (after discussion and action on amendments); some members of Conference were waiting for their opportunity to speak to the main motion, but never got the chance.

One can argue that because it takes a two-thirds vote to sustain a "previous question" motion, the main body of Conference agreed with the individuals who called for an end to debate. While that's true (and more debate may not have changed the outcome at all), those who were shut out by the moving of the previous question were hard pressed to feel the sense of brother(sister)hood that General Conference is supposed to generate. Consensus doesn't happen when open debate and minority voices are squelched. A number of people at Conference felt alienated and controlled rather than included. There ought to be better ways of keeping the process moving which do not end up making people feel disenfranchised.

For many people process is just as important as content; we can accept content we would not personally choose if we feel that we have been genuinely and fully included in the process. For that reason, it is probably just as well that the statements on militarism and the military chaplaincy were referred back to their respective boards. Even though there has already been a four-year process for the militarism statement, some people still feel that they

have not been heard. Allowing two more years to involve more people is probably a good thing.

Clearly, part of the problem with this Conference was that there were too many significant agenda items. Did we do justice to the doctrinal statement and the militarism statement which had both been in process for four years (already spanning one General Conference)? What safeguards will there be in the future to prevent an unrealistically heavy agenda? (Already the 1992 agenda looks full.)

Those of us who voted with the minority much of the time (as I did) now need to come to terms with what happened. I was angry, hurt, and extremely frustrated when I left Conference, but I have found ways to express those negative feelings honestly so that they will not fester within me. Now that Conference has chosen to go in a certain direction, I and others who dissented on a variety of issues (in a mix-and-match fashion at times, with different people dissenting on different issues) need to work at making peace and finding ways to build up the body rather than tear it down. While I don't expect that it will be easy, I am committed to finding ways to support with integrity those decisions with which I personally disagree.

I hope as well that the church will face squarely the questions of identity because I believe that they are at the heart of some of the discomfort we are currently experiencing. What does the Lord want the Brethren in Christ Church to be? What does the Lord want each one of us to be?

Phoebe



Pontius' Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius' Puddle" from the Visitor must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.



© Joel Kauffmann

While General Conference 1990 is fresh in mind, let me share some observations on procedures which might help us as we look forward to General Conference 1992. (Yes, I am looking forward to it . . . and not with fear and trepidation.)

First, I think it would be helpful, on such extensive and involved matters as the doctrinal statement and the Vision Planning administrative restructure proposal, to utilize a three-step process. Step one: the sponsors briefly highlight the reasons for their proposal and the key features which address perceived needs. (One person has suggested that sponsors should also point out their proposal's weaknesses or limitations. That strikes me as being overly optimistic; more than likely, sponsors feel they have overcome most serious limitations.)

Step two: the Conference body has a period of time in which to ask questions of clarification or intent, as well as to debate the pros and cons of the issue. Delegates could affirm or challenge rationale or wording, but no motions to amend would be accepted at this stage. (In the minds of some delegates, that was one of the major problems at the recent Conference; amendments kept siphoning off time and attention from the core issues.) A delegate might say, "I feel that Section X is ill-advised, and am prepared at a later time to offer an amendment which will do thus-and-so."

After this period of debate on the entire proposal, it may be evident that the recommendation has major flaws and would merit referral. Or the process could move to the third step, where motions to amend specific sections could be offered and voted on.

This was essentially the procedure envisioned for use in Conference's considering the doctrinal statement. The crunch of other agenda items, however, gave the delegate body only about an hour for step two, and no time for step three.

I would propose to the Board of Administration, and in fact to any board bringing a fairly involved recommendation, that this three-step approach be tried at the 1992 Conference. Pastors, you might field-test it in congregational councils this fall if you have a fairly complex item to consider. Let me know how it works (or doesn't work).

And now, two suggestions to congregational leaders about delegate selection for the 1992 General Conference.

1. As you know, we spent hours discussing several

A few (helpful?) suggestions

major items (Vision Planning, the doctrinal statement, and the militarism statement, to name three) which were referred and will be back with us in '92. There may be wisdom in having a high proportion of 1990 delegates returning as delegates in '92. It seems to me that having the background of the 1990 discussion may help us make better decisions in '92.

At least I would plead for relatively few brand new Brethren in Christ being named as voting delegates in '92. (I speak now of established congregations, not new church plantings.) Perhaps it is true, as one delegate commented, that attending General Conference is a great way to become oriented to the Brethren in Christ Church. But frankly I don't know how someone who has been part of the church for only a matter of months can fairly represent their congregation on such major issues as restructuring top leadership or adopting a denominational doctrinal statement. Perhaps we need to be reminded of the "member of conference" category, which allows for the orientation aspect, fellowship, and even provides discussion privileges on the floor of Conference.

2. Are you ready for an even more radical suggestion about delegates? I suggest congregations consider naming their 1992 General Conference delegates and alternates by the autumn of 1991. Granted, some delegates' plans may change and they won't be able to attend. But naming delegates considerably earlier than usual will give them time to do serious "homework" on the issues coming to the '92 Conference, especially the doctrinal statement. While many business items will not be available for study prior to the May '92 mailing of the Agenda, a new draft of the proposed doctrinal statement will likely be in circulation early in 1992.

No doubt there will be more written about the 1990 General Conference. (For example, time and space have prohibited reporting on some of the developments in the overseas churches which the mission board shared at Conference.) Two persons have approached me with their desire to write about parliamentary procedure—one with rough draft in hand! And the question of the role of leadership in the life of the church (which kept cropping up in various ways at Conference) is a topic we plan to address in the *Visitor* in the coming biennium.

Now, to get this issue into production, and move on to life A.C. (After Conference). . . .

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The "in between times"

by Glenn A. Ginder

"We like things smooth and in a groove" is the way the late Norman Wingert, missionary and poet, expressed a common sentiment. Even if we agree with the sentiment, we do not find it easy to halt the process of change. In fact, the present period for the church involves all of us (some more than others) in transition. This is a challenge because we so easily think of transition as a kind of insignificant "in between time." Change is seen as the stuff that gets sandwiched between greater, more stable times.

In this mode of thinking about transition, we are prone to work with some serious limitations. For one, the view that the really big times were either in the past or are coming in the future leaves us with very little energy or motivation for the present. The tendency is to "mark time" until we get through the change. The danger in this approach is that some God-breathed opportunity will most certainly be lost.

An even more serious problem with this thinking is the distortion it reflects about God. It allows certain segments of life to get blocked off from God's attention. If we assume that what *was* and what *will be* are the crucial realities, our prayers and our faith will focus there and not on the transition. The result is that, in the time of transition, we tend to function in more of a "struggle" mode than one of anticipation and victory.

There is a cure. The revelation of *who God is* and the record of *what God is doing* among his people both clearly demonstrate that God is the *God of the "in between times."* Consider one of our basic affirmations about God: "From eternity to eternity, Thou art God." We are declaring that God is the God of the eternities, both past and future. And we understand that what is between the eternities is also his. This is all very clear as we read the story of God's workings. The Bible shouts from cover to cover that this present time—the time between the eternities—is God's time. Yes, we know about the spectacular display of God's power in the eternity past as he spoke worlds and galaxies into being and laid plans for the salvation of the human race. And yes, we also know enough about the eternity future that we long for the day when all of creation will honor him as Lord and he will reign over the new heaven and the new earth. But as followers of Christ, we will not let anything dim our conviction that this time between the eternities is just as wonderfully in God's hands.

Our conviction about the importance of transitions is rooted not only in the nature of God. It is also clearly confirmed in the way God works in the lives of his people. Paul's example is classic. Philippians 1:23, "I am torn between the two . . .," clearly reckons with an in between time for Paul. Behind Paul and all around him was the experience and challenge of preaching the good news to a lost world. Ahead of him was the delight of eternal rest in the presence of Christ. Yet Paul was caught in the middle. Or was he? He could well have accepted his experience in the Roman prison as a mere transition from the "good fight" to "being with the Lord." But Paul was serving a God who doesn't work with in between times that way and he knew it. Instead Paul made his

prison time, which was so very "in between," a time of confidence and continued ministry (Phil. 1:25).

Transitions. We meet them in all sizes and shapes. Little ones like stop lights, doctor's offices, and airports—small in between times that could be lost if they are thought to be mere transitions from one important place or experience to another. Our theology teaches us, however, that God is present in all those "useless" moments. Choosing to acknowledge this can turn them into times of effervescent grace.

There is also the jumbo variety. We can get bogged down in such transitions as pastoral changes, pregnancies, or even the present adjustments in structures and systems (such as Vision Planning). When we do, complaint and shortsightedness become norms. Paul's dual motif of confidence and continuation are lost. We no longer represent the true spirit of the God of the in between times, who put his *best* into our time between the eternities. It is true that transitions are different from what precedes and what follows. But only in the way that evening is different from day and night. All three parts of the 24-hour cycle are of the same substance and yet the "transitional" evening has a special attraction. Surely the God of the in between times gives special attention to ours, whatever their size or shape.

By action of the 1990 General Conference, Glenn Ginder serves as bishop of two regional conferences: Central and Midwest.



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